THE PEACOCK MESSENGER

मयूरदूतम्

dr.p.k.narayana pillai

Upholds the Honour of Indian Womanhood

The original book 'Mayūrasandeśa' was written by Kerala Varma, the hero of the poem, in 1893 in Malayalam after 13 years of his release from jail and published the same year. The learned scholar and poet Dr. P. K. Narayana Pillai brought out a critical edition of the work in 1965 with an introduction and an original commentary entitled 'Kerala Hridaya'. The book 'Mayūradūtam' is a Sanskrit rendering by the same scholar and poet. The poem upholds the honour of the Indian womanhood by portraying Rani Lakshmibai as a heroic woman who had shown great will power in standing by her husband against tyranny and oppression. I am sure the book will be enjoyed by all lovers of Sanskrit poetry.

Dr. Karan Singh
(Foreword)

To
The Chief Editor
ARVACHINA SAMSKRITA
New Delhi
for favour of Review

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With an English Translation

By
Dr. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI

With a Foreword
By
Dr. KARAN SINGH

TRIVANDRUM

1984

Sanskrit - English
Poetry

MAYŪRADŪTAM

By

Dr. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI

A Sanskrit version of the Malayalam poem

Mayūrasandeśam by
KERALA VARMA VALIYA KOIL TAMPURAN

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Dedicated to

The Revered Memory of

Kerala Kalidasa

Kerala Varma Valiya Koil Tampuran

अन्येषामप्युपकृतिकृते
कल्पते चेन्न कायः
किं वा तस्मिन् फलमयि सखे
प्राणिनामत्र लोके ? ।।

O, friend, of what earthly use
is this body if it is not
to be of service to others as well ?

Mayūradūtam 1.16.

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FOREWORD

The concept of the messenger in Indian literature originates from 'Meghadūta' of Kalidasa. The cloud, the air, the swan, the beetle and the peacock are some of the elements of nature personified as messengers by the poets. These messenger poems contain long episodic descriptions of the sentiments of the lover and the beloved. The 'Mandākrānta' metre has been used in most of the Sanskrit messenger poems.

The objects of poetry as expounded by Acharya Mammaṭa are :

काव्यं यशसेऽर्थकृते व्यवहारविदे शिवेतरक्षतये
सद्यः परनिर्वृतये कान्तासम्मिततयोपदेशयुजे

(to earn fame and wealth, to educate in social dealings, to destroy the inauspicious, to attain the highest bliss and to advise like a loving wife). The book 'Mayūradūtam' is intended to fulfil some of these objectives.

The original book 'Mayūrasandeśa' was written by Kerala Varma, the hero of the poem, in 1893 in Malayalam after 13 years of his release from jail, and published the same year. The learned scholar and poet Dr. P. K. Narayana Pillai brought out a critical edition of the work in 1965 with an introduction and an original commentary entitled 'Kerala Hṛdaya'. The book 'Mayūradūtam' is a Sanskrit rendering by the same scholar and poet. The poem upholds the honour of the Indian womanhood by portraying Rani Lakshmibai as a heroic woman who had shown great will power in standing by her husband against tyranny and oppression. I am sure the book will be enjoyed by all lovers of Sanskrit poetry.

New Delhi
1 November 1984.

KARAN SINGH

INTRODUCTION

Though it has become a cliche with Western - and following them Indian - historians of Sanskrit literature that the original springs of creative poetry had dried up even before the advent of the British, occasionally, we do come across Sanskrit poets up to the present date who show rare originality of conception and consummate skill in artistic execution. The pride of place among them should go to Kerala Varma, consort of the Senior Rani Lakshmibai of the Indian princely state of Travancore during the Victorian era. His historico-biographical poem *Viśākhavijaya* in felicitous and forceful Sanskrit is indeed a significant contribution to the epic genre of Sanskrit poetry. His pent up feelings against the unjust ruler, Ayilyam Tirunal, who had imprisoned him for an indiscreet act of sedition, find a powerful expression in verses brimming with rage and courage. All the devices of Sanskrit poetry were at his command; and he could infuse new life into his muse by the sweep of his genius and wealth of learning. As if in answer to his prayer, the ruthless ruler was soon succeeded on the throne by Visakham Tirunal, a friend and admirer of the poet; and his period of suffering and agony in prison was over.

Kerala Varma also wrote in Malayalam based on the same dark period of his life, a lighter poem called *Mayūrasandeśa*, modelled after *Meghadūta*, the celebrated lyric of Kālidāsa. To Dr. P. K. Narayana Pillai, equally erudite and endowed with a refined literary sensibility, goes the credit of publishing this lyric with his own historical introduction and critical commentary in Malayalam. His proficiency in Sanskrit, English and Malayalam literatures is of the highest order and his delicate sensibility does not allow itself to be bent under the heavy weight of his scholarship. To the world of Sanskrit letters, he has now given indeed a very remarkable and valuable Sanskrit version, *Mayūradūta* which is as rich in poetic fervour as it is consummate in metrical felicity.

True, the number of imitative and second-rate *dūtakāvyas* in Sanskrit is a legion. At first sight one is apt to dismiss this also as another ilk without any originality meriting special mention or attention. But a closer reading with some patience will reveal how a new spirit has been very dexterously woven into the trite frame. The apparent frame of a parted husband sending a love-message to his devoted wife far away, through a peacock, is indeed a worn-out poetic concept. The only difference is that the hero and the heroine are historical personages in living memory. The description of his pathetic forlornness, concern for the welfare of his loving wife, the leisured description of places of religious and tourist interest on the way to the wife's abode, the various waterways to be carefully chosen by the messenger, and finally, the beloved wife suffering the agony of separation, her possible engagements, and the message itself - all these are trite and proto types of what we find in Kālidāsa's 'Cloud Messenger'. An unwary reader may not be able to read anything more between the lines.

But to a sensitive reader who knows the biographical background of Kerala Varma, an entirely new significance comes to be suggested in a most striking and appealing way. This is the very highway of *vastudhvani* highlighted as a norm of best poetry by no less a critic than Ānandavardhana who is admittedly the doyen of Indian theoreticians of poetry. Or in the language of his predecessors, it might be designated as *anyāpadeśa* or 'indirect expression', a most effective poetic device as highlighted by Kuntaka, another prince among Indian practical critics.

The background is this : Towards the end of the last century, the ruling Mahārāja of Travancore was Ayilyam Tirunal who had his own pride and prejudice against his brother, Yuvarāja Viśākham Tirunal and his friend Kerala Varma, the consort of the Senior Rani of the Travancore royal house. His Dewan was Seshayya Sastri. The Senior Queen was herself a gifted lady who authored several poems and who was also proficient in music. She became a recipient of the prestigious award of C. I. from Queen Victoria and passed away in 1901. Suspecting the loyalty of the couple to him as against his brother, the Mahārāja started harassing Kerala Varma in various ways; and the latter reacted

indignantly at this ill-treatment. He injudiciously wrote a letter to Dewan Seshayya Sastri to be wary of the mendacious machinations of the unscrupulous ruler. He had written: "O Dewan ! the Mahārāja will cause you some injury. So you may either relinquish office or make sure that your cooks are dependable to the core; for he intends to appoint his trusted Peishkar Nanu Pillai in your place at an early date." The Dewan indiscreeṭly passed on the letter to the Mahārāja himself who became so enraged that Kerala Varma was charged of treason and imprisoned first at Alleppy and later kept under house arrest at Harikṣetra (Harippad). Though his movements were heavily restricted, he had permission to visit the Subrahmanya temple for worship.

In the poem, the messenger selected is a peacock which happens to be the mount (*vāhana*) of Lord Subrahmanya. That he saw it during the time of his visit to the temple appears quite natural. This Lord Viśākha can also apply with equal force by *śleṣa* or the device of *double entendre* to the Yuvarāja Viśākham Tirunal who was friendly to Kerala Varma and Lakshmībāi, the separated couple. The name of a trusted officer of Viśākham Tirunal was Nīlakaṇta Pillai. He used to take confidential messages from Kerala Varma to Lakshmībāi and *vice versa* eluding the vigilance of the crooked Mahāraja. The word Nīlakanṭha in Sanskri means peacock also. Thus the peacock in the poem is made to serve ingeniously as a fit symbol of his trusted messenger in the palace of Travancore.

The Mahārāja was born under the Āśleśa star whose presiding deity is the serpent. The repeated references to the serpent in the poem, to be ruthlessly destroyed by its natural enemy, the peacock, thus acquires a new allegoric meaning as sly references to the wicked Mahārāja himself who deserves destruction for his misdeeds.

Furthermore, the detailed description of the heroine as a firm, dignified and resolute personality, noble in conduct and efficient in state affairs, reveals a new dimension of Indian womanhood, with a status not in any way inferior to that of men. This is a special feature of Kerala, and it has found a beautiful and spontaneous expression in the poem.

History also tells us that after the inimical Mahārāja's demise, Viśākham Tirunal succeeded him to the throne; and the first thing the new ruler did was to release Kerala Varma and restore to him his rightful place in the palace. Similarly, the trusted officer Neelakanṭa Pillai was elevated to the position of the Chief Executive Officer in the palace.

That the pen is mightier than the sword is well illustrated by this poem. All this background is illuminatingly set forth in the notes to the key verses concerned by Dr. P. K. Narayana Pillai. The gifted poet that Kerala Varma was, he could write recollection of his experiences in prison and succeed in giving vent to his indignation against his oppressor in a language which is truly poetic. And eventually, it brings him redress from the anguish too—*śivetarakṣati*—as Indian critics would put it.

While talking of correspondences (*saṁvāda*) with earlier literary output of masters, Ānandavardhana notes three types: (i) that like a reflected image of an object in a mirror; (ii) that like a painted portrait of an object, (iii) that like the resemblance between twins. He observes that while the first one has no reality of its own, the second has but a seeming reality, and thus deserves no credit But the third likeness is something to be welcomed and not to be condemned; because both the twins have not only independent bodies but independent souls of their own. The parallelism between this *Mayūradūta* and *Meghadūta* is indeed like that of the twins in the parlance of Ānandavardhana.

Nay, it is much more. We know of several experimenters of this *Dūta-kāvya* in the history of Sanskrit lyric poetry, Jinasena, Dhoyī, Vedānta Deśika etc. They all experimented with varying main *rasa* or sentiment from *vipralambha-śṛṅgāra* to *bhakti*, *śānta* and so forth. But no one ever attempted to make the *vipralambha-śṛṅgāra* itself richer by adding on to it a veneer of autobiographical and historical reality.

The treatment of the heroine again is neither conventional nor stereotyped. The husband not only loves her intimately but admires her for her dignity and sagacity; and openly expresses his gratitude to her for various good turns. The description of the Kerala landscape is at once realistic and enchanting. The life of

even boatmen and so on finds a ready reflection in the poetic account. The attractions of the cities in the modern age have also been set forth strikingly.

A gifted poet and author like Dr. P. K. Narayana Pillai, has rendered this Malayalam poem with many a merit into chiselled Sanskrit meter. The result is 'a joy for ever'. What is all the more impressive is his racy and readable English translation too, given immediately below the Sanskrit verses to help the readers of today who may really require such aid.

The printing, format and proof-reading are all excellent and it is a rich repast for lovers of modern Sanskrit poetry. More than a volume of papers, a unique poem like this can exhibit better that the springs of Sanskrit Muse are not dried up. From all quarters, from far and near, the learned poet-professor has received many encomiums, academic honours and awards. And surely, his work needs no introduction. It is only his scholarly courtesy, which has made him seek a few words from me regarding the poem. In deference to his wishes, I have done it in my humble way, remembering all the while the truth of Mallinātha's remark:

जगति विविधविद्यासारमुष्टिधयानां
परभणितिपरीक्षा युज्यते सज्जनानाम् ।

K. KRISHNAMOORTHY

Prasanthinilayam,
Andhra Predesh,
August 10, 1984.

PREFACE

In appreciating and imitating Kalidasas's monumental lyric the Meghadūta no other part of India appears to have shown so much interest as Kerala. To the credit of Kerala poets there are about thirty *dūtakāvyas* in Sanskrit and about the same number in Malayalam. Among the latter Kerala Varma's Mayūra-sandeśam is the most prominent one for various reasons. While the other *dūtakāvyas* are all figments of imagination it is based on the separation from his beloved as he was imprisoned for treason. He wrote the lyric in 1893, thirteen years after his release and it reflects "emotion recollected in tranquillity." Impressed with the novelty and beauty of the poem, O. Chanthu Menon, one of the pioneers in the field of Malayalam novel, published its first edition with his own introduction while both the hero and the heroine were alive. Soon after the publication the poem became very popular throughout Kerala and its verbal beauty particularly prompted people to learn it by rote.* A. R. Raja Raja Varma the then Professor of Oriental Languages in the Maharaja's College and a well known grammarian provided it with the commentary Marmāvabodhini". Mahakavi Ulloor S. Parameswara Iyer, the most outstanding literary historian of Kerala and a great poet translated it into English in metrical form. The illustrious Malayalam poet Kumaran Asan translated it into Sanskrit in 1912 a few verses, the following being the first among them :

श्रीमान् वञ्चिक्षितिभृदुरगर्क्षोद्भवो भागिनेयीं
लक्ष्मीं विश्वोत्तरगुणगणैस्तां स तैस्तैर्गरिष्ठाम्
आर्त्तां कुर्वन् प्रणयवसतेः प्रेयसो विप्रयोगा-
च्चिक्षेपे त बत निरवधौ केरलं दुःखसिन्धौ ।।

This effort to enrich modern Sanskrit poetry was later abandoned by the poet for unknown reasons.

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* In fact the present writer's father taught him the whole poem sixty years ago depending entirely on his memory.

Historical Background

The erstwhile State of Travancore, in the Southernmost part of India, once enjoyed the honour of being placed in the "first rank of Native States" when Ayilyam Tirunal* Rama Varma Maharaja was the ruler. His Highness ascended the musnad in 1860 and his reign which extended over a period of about twenty years, was marked by the development of wise and enlightened principles of administration. He was not only a great ruler but also a man of learning, well- versed in many languages, appreciative of fine arts and a musician of acknowledged talent. Learning and culture grew up in the State under his fostering care. His geniality was profound and unaffected, but "inside the silken-glove was the iron-hand." In 1866 Queen Victoria conferred on him the high distinction of "Knight Grand Commander of the Most Exalted Order of the Star of India." But during the latter part of his reign, the Maharaja proved to be despotic and corrupt to the great disappointment of his subjects.

Prince Rama Varma Viśākham Tirunal was the heir-apparent when Ayilyam Tirunal Maharaja was in the gadi. A man of deep learning, ideal character and progressive views, the Prince used to help the Maharaja, his elder brother, with his valuable advice in carrying out the several reforms in the administrative system. But as the administration was getting degenerated perforce he fell out with his brother and wisely following a middle course kept him to himself, taking interest mostly in intellectual pursuits, without giving any handle to his brother to strike him with. He ascended the throne in 1880 soon after his brother's demise. By the time he succeeded to the throne he had already earned a great reputation for his attainments particularly as an English author. When a prince, he was made a Fellow of the Madras University, a rare honour in those days. As a ruler, His Highness exerted great influence on the services of the State and rooted out corruption. In earnest and indefatigable appli-

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* Born under the star Aśleṣa (Ayilyam is the corrupt form of Aśleṣa in Malayalam. Tirunal comprises two words tiru meaning Śri and nāl meaning star).

cation to business, he was a model for the whole services to follow. He passed away in 1885 at the end of a regime which brought peace and prosperity to his subjects.

Rani Lakshmibai, the heroine of the poem, was tha niece of the above two royal personages and the Senior Rani of the Travancore royal house at that time. An extremely beautiful princess born with extraordinary gifts, she was married to Kerala Varma, a member of the Lakshmipuram Palace in 1858 when she was eleven years old. The princess who received instruction in Sanskrit in her childhood from her learned mother gradually grew up as a talented musician, poetess and water-colour painter. Her consort gave her instruction in Sanskrit classics and in turn she taught him music. Nalacarita, Gopikāvastrāpaharaṇa, Mahiṣhāsuramardini stotra, Pārvatīstotra, and Virahiṇīpralāpa are some of her poetic compositions. One should not mistake her great qualities of head and heart described in the poem as the usual product of poetic exaggeration. In addition to having artistic talents she was highly intelligent and deeply compassionate, But her indomitable will which was proved by remaining loyal to her consort, defying even the directives from the ruthess Maharaja, stands supreme amongst those qualities. Queen Victoria conferred the honour of C. I. on the Maharani in 1880 and the insignia was presented to her by the Resident at a Durbar held at Trivandrum. She passed away childless in the year 1901 when she was only fifty-three years of age.

As stated earlier, Kerala Varma, the author and hero of the Mayūrasandeśa in Malayalam, was a member of the Lakshmipuram Palace at Changanachery which had matrimonial relations with Travancore royal family. The branch of the family to which Kerala Varma belonged, later on migrated to Harippad and lived in Anantapuram palace. As matrilineal system of inheritance was in vogue in the royal family, those who married its princesses had only the status of a consort. Kerala Varma married Lakshmi bai when he was fourteen years old and he enjoyed the status of Valiya Koil Tampuran (the consort of the Senior Rani of the royal family). With the facilities which he had in the palace and especially with the kind patronage of the Maharaja Ayilyam Tirunal, he grew to be an extraordinary man of versatile genius. He was a great Sanskrit scholar well-versed in about half a dozen

languages including English. A great poet and a prose-writer through self-less and dedicated services, he became the leader of renaissance in Malayalam and was recognised as Sahitya Chakravarti throughout Kerala, irrespective of state, caste or religion. He is recognised as the father of modern Malayalam prose. Kerala Varma's main contribution in Malayalam comprises six Kathakali texts, four poems including *Mayūrasandeśam*, translations of three Sanskrit works including Kalidasa's Sakuntala and the translations of the novel Akbar from English. Among his numerous Sanskrit works, the epic poem *Viśākhavijaya* is the most prominent one. He was also proficient in music and played on Vīṇa with expertise. A hunter, a shooter, a rider, a cricket player, a wrestler, an acrobat, Kerala Varma was unparallelled for his versatility in those days. Wonderfully enough his occultic powers too added considerably to his versatility. Once in a demonstration using his *mantrasakti* he brought an animal target to his presence from a distant place and shot it down to the surprise of all present. Above all, he was compassionate to the very core. Such was the man; such were his attainments. In 1895 he was awarded the C.S.I. title. As indicated above, his wife passed away in 1901 and he lived a widower for 14 years till he died in 1915 after a car accident.

A conflict brews

The demoralisation of Maharaja Ayilyam Tirunal's rule and the resentment of the heir apparent, as indicated above, had their natural repercussion on the Maharani and her consort. But they behaved prudently and maintained good relation with the Maharaja. All the same the fact remained that for various reasons they were in their heart of hearts more loyal and attached to the prince Visakham Tirunal than to his elder brother. The Maharaja also, in spite of his suspicion regarding their loyalty, continued to be kind and helpful to them. Naturally, this situation did not continue for long. Then occurred an incident which clearly carried conviction to the Maharaja that the couple was really on the side of his brother. Once, when the Maharaja was on tour to Benares accompanied by Kerala Varma, the latter wrote to the Maharani that she might call on the Visakham Tirunal at Trivandrum. But unexpectedly the letter fell into the hands of the Maharaja. With this, the closer alliance of the couple with the heir-apparent became patent and the Maharaja started harassing them. Kerala Varma

reacted violently to this harassment, but he was advised to exercise patience both by Visakham Tirunal and the Maharani. In spite of this restraint, Kerala Varma in his righteous indignation, used to act and speak against the Maharaja.

Kerala Varma in trap

The conflict reached its zenith and the Maharaja was taking steps to declare his brother unworthy of succeeding him to the throne and to neck-out Kerala Varma from the palace. In that tense situation overwhelmed with anger towards the Maharaja, he sent an anonymous letter to Sir Seshayya Sastri, the then Dewan of the State, based on actual information that the Maharaja, would try to poison him and appoint his trusted Peishkar in his place. The fact is stated by Kerala Varma himself in his epic poem Visakhavijaya. This letter was handed over to the Maharaja by the Dewan and the handwriting was duly identified as that of Kerala Varma.

The dramatic arrest

The Maharaja kept complete secrecy about Kerala Varma's letter but immediately reported the crime to the Governor at Madras seeking directions for necessary action in the matter. Sensing his brother's intention to punish Kerala Varma, prince Visakham Tirunal tried his best to save him from the royal wrath. He even met the Maharaja and suggested that Kerala Varma might be detained in the palace itself under strict restrictions of contacts and movements. Further, he assured his brother that he would advise Kerala Varma not to behave like that in future. But the Maharaja told him that the matter was out of his control as he could act only according to instructions from the Governor. Without much delay Governor's permission to deal with Kerala Varma just like any other criminal was received and the Maharaja bent his mind to arrest and put him in jail. For this purpose a pair of silver hand cuffs was got ready and a date fixed which was not divulged to anybody else. The Maharaja wanted to have the sinister pleasure of inflicting a shock on Kerala Varma by arresting him without any warning.

The date fixed for Kerala Varma's arrest was 4th August 1875 (21st Karkatakam 1050 according to Malayalam calendar)

On that day at about 10 a. m., without any notice, a senior police officer reached the residence of the Maharani and produced the arrest warrant against Kerala Varma for treason. Observing that the officer was behaving in a rather discourteous manner, the Maharani asked him to get out of the palace lest he should be beaten by her servant maids with brooms. Then Kerala Varma pacified the Maharani by pointing out that it was not befitting her to get angry with an officer doing his duty under royal command. Then the Maharani insisted on following Kerala Varma to the unknown places to which he was being taken. On being told that the royal pleasure was not in favour of that she took the firm position that she would not allow her husband to be taken out of the palace and stood there catching hold of Kerala Varma's hand. But ultimately she yielded on being told that, if necessary, force would be used in taking Kerala Varma into custody. The police hand-cuffed Kerala Varma and escorted him to the carriage that was kept ready at the eastern gate of the palace to take him to the boat by which he was to be taken to the jail at Alleppey about 150 kilometres from Trivandrum. On his way as Kerala Varma was passing the southern gate (the gate described in the poem) the Maharani came out with her dishevelled hair and ran after his carriage in torrents of tears. But she was stopped by soldiers posted there, and some of her very close relatives somehow managed to take her back to the palace.

Life in prison

Kerala Varma was first detained at the Alleppey Palace converted into a prison, for a period of about fifteen months and at the instance of the Maharaja he was treated very badly by the officers in charge. About this he stated elsewhere: "The officers exercised their authority too much over me. Further, giving me all kinds of troubles they ruled there supreme." Once it so happened that the Maharaja fell ill and he had to request for medical help from Kerala Varma's elder brother who was a well-known physician. At that time Kerala Varma's mother made a request to the Maharaja to transfer Kerala Varma to Harippad and keep him under house arrest in the Anantapuram palace. Probably being got softened as a result of the illness, the Maharaja allowed Kerala Varma to stay in his own palace with all the

restrictions imposed on an ordinary prisoner but for the freedom to worship at the temple dedicated to Subrahmanya.

The miserable life as a prisoner in his own house made Kerala Varma regret very much his past deeds and he thought of appeasing the Maharaja by writing a poem entitled *Kṣamāpaṇa-sahasra* (a thousand apologies). It is a wonderful work consisting of 1000 Sanskrit stanzas with all the literary beauty of an epic poem. On completion, the poem was submitted to the Maharaja but he did not go through it probably to safeguard himself from being moved by Kerala Varma's irresistible muse. The manuscript was ordered to be kept secretly in the palace library. Being convinced that the Maharaja would not relent during his lifetime Kerala Varma thought that god of death alone could come to his rescue. Therefore mustering all his mystic powers and literary gifts he began to appease the god of death by composing the dreadful lyric *Yama-praṇāma-śataka* (a century of verses in homage to Yama). He used to compose one stanza every day and prostrate before the god of death facing south which is believed to be his quarter. It is believed that astonishingly enough the king met with his end after a short illness on the very day (19-10-1055) on which Kerala Varma completed the hymn by composing the hundredth stanza.

Lakshmibai in separation

Having interned Kerala Varma in the Alleppey Jail the Maharaja began to harass Lakshmibai by restricting her personal freedom and curtailing many of her royal privileges. The Maharani was not permitted to go out of the palace but for worshipping at the Subrahmanya temple at Ulloor and the Padmanabhaswamy temple in the fort. After imposing all these restrictions the king compelled her to marry a second time and even nominated the new bridegroom. "I have not yet become a widow to marry again" was the categorical reply given to the king by the heroic Maharani. Kerala Varma has made a reference to this in the poem (2.60).

To appreciate the strong will and determination behind this categorical rejection of the Maharani a clarification is essential. The Travancore royal family is a constitutional monarchy and as

such the ruler is to decide as to who should be the consort of any princess. In this situation, for a princess to turn down a matrimonial proposal by the Maharaja requires extraordinary fortitude of mind. Further, it may be taken into account that Kerala Varma was imprisoned for the crime of treason, pure and simple. An ordinary woman would not have dared to thwart the will of such a powerful monarch as Ayilyam Tirunal and stand by her companion. With this great act of heroism Lakshmibai upheld the greatness of Indian woman-hood and won a place in the galaxy of heroic women of India.

The reunion : As soon as Visakham Tirunal ascended the throne he released Kerala Varma from jail and brought about the reunion of the couple to their great joy and to the relief of all concerned.

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Trivandrum, **P. K. Narayana Pillai**
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मयूरदूतम्

THE PEACOCK–MESSENGER

पूर्वभागः

श्रीमान् वञ्चिक्षितिपरिवृढः संश्रिताश्लेषजन्मा
लक्ष्मीं पुष्यद्गुणनिलयनां भागिनेयीं कृपार्हाम् ।
आर्त्तां कृत्वा प्रियविरहतः प्राक्षिपत् क्षिप्रमुच्चैः
सीमातीते कदनजलधौ केरलं रोषमूढः ॥ १ ॥

प्राणेश्वर्याः प्रियतमनिधेर्मर्मघाताद्वियोगा-
द्रोषोद्भूतात् स तु नरपतेर्मानहानाच्च कामी ।
शोकोत्सन्नः कथमपि चतुष्पञ्चवर्षाण्यनैषीत्
कः स्यादत्र प्रतिविधिरहो! दिष्टदोषस्य लोके ॥ २ ॥

PART I

1. The glorious ruler of Vañci, born of the star Āśleṣa, causing deep sorrow of separation to his own niece Lakṣmī Bai, an abode of noble qualities, who deserves to be treated with kindness, threw Kerala Varma, her spouse into the boundless ocean of grief (by shutting him in jail) in wild fury.[1]

2. On account of the agony of separation from his beloved, the greatest treasure of his life, and also the dishonour heaped on him by the royal wrath that lover fell in great distress and he had to spend four to five years in that sad plight. Indeed there is hardly any remedy for what happens by ill-luck![2]

आविश्चिन्तस्स खलु निवसन् श्रीहरिक्षेत्रपुर्यां
देवं स्कन्दं कलितकुतुकं सेवितुं जातु यातः ।
भाविश्रेयःपिशुनशकुनं दृष्टवान् नीलकण्ठं
देवागारे क्वचन भगवद्वाहनं मोहनाङ्गम् ॥ ३ ॥

मेघालोकान्मुदितहृदयं बर्हभारप्रसारै-
र्नृत्यन्तं तं ललितचलनं केकिवर्यं स दृष्ट्वा ।
स्मारंस्मारं निजसहचरीं नीलवेणीं वियुक्तां
शोकावेगात् त्रुटितहृदयस्तस्थिवांस्तत्र मौनी ॥ ४ ॥

सन्तापघ्नं सकलजगतां स्कन्दमावन्द्य भक्त्या
प्रीते तस्मिन् किमपि न भवेद्वाममित्याश्वसन् सः ।
स्थित्वा तत्र प्रणयविवशस्तं मयूरं नितान्तं
चिन्तामग्नः सपदि मनसा संजगादैवमार्तः ॥ ५ ॥

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3. While staying at Harikṣetra overwhelmed with anxious thoughts he went to the temple in all eagerness to worship Lord Skanda. There in a corner he beheld a beautiful peacock, the Lord's bearer whose sight foretold the good fortune that was in store for him.[3]

4. Looking at that peacock *par excellence,* which danced exquisitely with all feathers spread out in elation caused by the appearance of rainclouds in the sky, he remembered his beloved of dark, glossy hair and stood there dumb-founded in the most afflicted mood.

5. After a while he worshipped with great devotion, Skanda, who removes the ills of one and all, and consoling himself that due to divine grace, nothing untoward would happen, stood there for some time in a contemplative mood, and overwhelmed with love, spoke to the bird as follows in the language of the heart:[4]

धन्यात्मन् हे खगवर ! जय प्रीतियोगादिदानीं
सन्तप्तं मामवशमचिराद्रक्ष चान्यायरुद्धम् ।
वन्यावासे विहगनिवहे वीक्ष्य तांस्तान् गुणौघां-
श्चक्रे वाहं गिरिशतनयस्त्वां महाभाग्यवन्तम् ॥ ६ ॥

विश्वे शश्वद् भुजगकुलसंस्पर्धया त्वत्समाने
पक्षिश्रेष्ठे चरति सरसं यः सुरैरर्चनीयः ।
देवः शौरिः स खलु ममतां दर्शयंस्त्वय्यजस्रं
धत्ते नूनं शिरसि रुचिरं बर्हखण्डं त्वदीयम् ॥ ७ ॥

कान्त्या पक्षिप्रवर ! वपुषः कः खगस्त्वत्समानः
केकारावे तव च मधुरे तृप्तिमाप्नोति को वा ? ।
नृत्तं तेऽपि प्रियमनुपमं प्रेक्षकाणां समेषां
शोकानां मे शुभगुण ! भवान् नाशनायेशितालम् ॥ ८ ॥

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6. O, blessed, preeminent Peacock, victory unto thee! Please be compassionate and bring instant succour to me, one who is worried, helpless and unlawfully detained. From among the wild birds, Skanda chose you as his fond bearer no doubt, on account of your various qualities. O, you are highly lucky indeed!

7. Lord Kṛṣṇa adored even by gods, who rides with pleasure the distinguished bird, Garuḍa, which is on a par with you in its habitual hatred for serpents, wears always on his head a feather from your pretty tail demonstrating beyond doubt his deep affection for you.

8. O friend, which bird can come anywhere near you in physical beauty ? Who will feel satiated on hearing your melodious songs ? Your dance too is inimitable and it brings joy to all on-lookers. Being endowed with such good qualities you are certainly capable of putting an end to all of my miseries.

दूने दीने कुरु मयि कृपां विप्रयोगाभितप्ते
साहाय्यं च प्रियद ! कुरु मे मन्दभाग्याय योग्यम् ।
स्यानन्दूरं सुरपुरनिभं प्राप्य मत्प्राणनाथां
सन्देशान्मे विरहविधुरां प्लावयानन्दवार्धौ ॥ ९ ॥

श्रीमन् केकिन् ! यदि तु भवता प्राप्यते सा पुरी चेत्
कान्त्याभोगादवनिकमलां मत्प्रियां वीक्ष्य साध्वीम् ।
भूयान्नूनं नयनसुकृतं किञ्च तत्प्राणरक्षा-
कृत्येन स्यान्महितमथ ते पुण्यजातं सुजातम् ॥ १० ॥

कल्यावेशात् कलुषितधियश्चापलान्मेऽतिवेलं
कल्याणाङ्ग्याः पतग ! कठिनं दुःखजातं नु जातम् ।
कल्या दैवात् कथमपि समुन्मूलितस्वान्तशल्या
कल्या साऽस्मत्कुशलकथनादाशु दीनानुकम्पिन् ! ॥ ११ ॥

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9. O, dispenser of favours, take pity on me, who am miserable, afflicted and sunk in the grief of separation from my beloved, and render suitable help to me, a victim of ill-fate. Please go to Syānandūra (Anantaśayana/Trivandrum) as glorious as the celebrated celestial city and make my beloved swim in the ocean of bliss, by delivering my message of love to her pining under separation.

10. Once you reach that city, O, dear Peacock, your eyes will derive their life's reward by seeing my beloved, who is in personal charm goddess Lakṣmī born of earth. Further, you will also accumulate in a large measure, moral merit by saving her precious life.

11. Deep and unparallelled grief has been caused to my beloved, a peerless beauty, on account of impetuous deeds perpetrated by me in fury beyond control. O, friend of the distressed, you may somehow relieve that noble lady immediately of her grief by delivering to her the good news of my well-being.[5]

तत्ताद्दश्या नरपतिभिया तत्पुरं चाधिगन्तुं
दृष्ट्वा देवीं कुशलमपि मे वक्तुमौचित्यपूर्वम् ।
नान्यः कश्चित्प्रभवति खगश्रेष्ठ ! तस्मात् त्वयाद्य
प्रीत्या नित्यं कदनलुलिता सान्त्वनीया प्रिया मे ॥ १२ ॥

मेघच्छन्नं मलिनगगनं वीक्ष्य लोलायताक्षी
प्राणप्रेष्ठा मम विरहतस्तप्यमाना नितान्तम् ।
रोदित्येषा मुहुरतितरां मित्र ! गत्वाऽतिवेगात्
तापं तस्याः परिहर मम क्षेमवार्ताविचोभिः ॥ १३ ॥

स्मृत्वा केकिन् ! चरणयुगलं स्कान्दमेकावलम्बं
भक्त्या स्वस्मिन् हृदयकमले मत्सुखार्थं भजन्ती ।
प्रायः सर्वानपि च दिवसान् यापयत्यर्चनैर्या
चित्तं तस्याः शिशिरय सखे ! प्राप्य तत्सन्निधिं त्वम् ॥१४॥

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12. So great is the fear for the King that none else would dare to go to that city nor to meet that royal lady full of anxiety, and inform her of my tidings. Therefore, O, pre-eminent bird, you should kindly go and console her, who is shaken by deep sorrow.

13. That beautiful damsel who is as dear to me as my own life will now be shedding floods of tears, looking at the cloud-strewn sky and feeling the intensive pangs of separation from me. Please go immediately and remedy her grief with words conveying my weal.[6]

14. O, Peacock, be good enough to reach my darling immediately and remove the heat of sorrow from her heart. In devotion she keeps the holy feet of Skanda in her heart and worships them for my sake believing to be the only support in her life. Alas! she spends almost all the days in a month, piously observing religious vows praying for my good fortune.

कष्टं तीव्राच्चिरसमुदितादातपान्मद्वियोगात्
तापार्ता या श्रममुपगता मालतीवाभितप्ता ।
प्रीत्या तस्याः खगवर ! भवानद्य मद्दूत्यरूपै-
स्तोयासारैः सपदि कुरुतां चित्तसन्तापशान्तिम् ॥ १५ ॥

ब्रूयामादौ विहगवर ! तं देशमाप्तुं च मार्गं
सन्देशोक्तैस्तदनु तरसा साधयिष्याम्यहं त्वाम् ।
अन्येषामप्युपकृतिकृते कल्पते चेन्न कायः
किं वा तस्मिन् फलमयि! सखे! प्राणिनामत्र लोके ॥ १६ ॥

सीमातीतं प्रणयमिह मय्यावहन्त्याः प्रियायाः
क्षेमार्थं मत्प्रियसख ! यतस्वार्द्रचित्तोऽतिमात्रम् ।
आमन्त्र्येमं त्रिदशपृतनाधीशमीशस्य सूनुं
निर्विघ्नस्त्वं सपदि शुभदामारभस्वाद्य यात्राम् ॥ १७ ॥

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15. On account of the poignant, long separation from me, her darling, she is immersed in grief and as such she resembles that jasmine's tender bloom withered out in tropical heat. O, distinguished bird, please destroy soon the heat of sorrow in the heart of my beloved by sprinkling it with the water of my message of love.

16. I shall first describe to you the route to reach that place and then I shall let you go soon after entrusting you with my message. O, friend, of what earthly use is this body if it is not to be of service to others ?

17. O, dear friend, kindly lend some sincere effort for the wellbeing of my beloved whose love for me is unlimited. You may take leave of Skanda, the son of Śiva and the Commander of the army of gods, and start your auspicious journey soon free from all obstacles.

गच्छंस्तूर्णं खग ! जनपदे सावधानो न चेत् त्वां
केचित् कुर्युः सुभगवपुषं पञ्जरस्थं सहेलम् ।
वर्षारम्भान्मुदितहृदयास्त्वां मयूर्यश्च रागा-
दालोकाद्यैर्वनभुवि वशीकर्तुकामा भवेयुः ॥ १८ ॥

मध्ये देशे खगवर ! परं दुर्जनानामभावा-
न्निर्बाधं चाप्यतिहितकरं तेन मार्गेण यानम् ।
वाटावल्यां विटपिषु सुखेनास्थितश्चाप्तकाम-
स्तत्रत्येषु प्रतिनवनिकुञ्जेषु विश्रम्य गच्छेः ॥ १९ ॥

स्वच्छन्दं ते गगनसरणौ सम्यगुड्डीय दूरं
गन्तुं बन्धो ! निजगुरुतया क्लेशकारी तथापि ।
पीनाकारस्तव तु रुचिरो बर्हभारः कदाचि-
न्मार्गेष्वात्मावनविधिकृते नोपकुर्यान्न केकिन् ! ॥ २० ॥

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18. O, bird, in case you happen to walk absent-minded in places crowded with people, I may warn you that fascinated by your beautiful form, people may try to cage you in a hilarious mood. Further, you may note that when you travel through the forest areas the peahens excited on account of the advent of rainy season would try to captivate you by their protestations of love.

19. The middle region being free from wicked people you can go conveniently that way undistrubed. O, bird, you may proceed on your onward journey sitting at ease on branches of garden trees and taking rest in nearby houses overgrown with green creepers.

20. On account of its weight the beautiful but dense plumage of your tail might cause you occasionally some hindrance in rising freely up in the sky and flying to distant places. Yet, my friend, it will prove to be of some help on certain occasions in protecting your own self.

क्रीडालौल्याद् ग्रहणकुतुकास्त्वां यदि द्रावयेयु-
बलिास्तेषां खग ! पटुतया सन्निपत्याग्रदेशे ।
भीतान् कृत्वा प्रकृतिचपलांस्तान् जवाद् धावयंस्त्वं
कोपावेशात् प्रहरणपरः पिञ्छमुच्चालयोच्चैः ॥ २१ ॥

उग्राः केचिद् बहुलगरला दुष्करोन्मूलनाः स्यु-
र्नागाः केकिन् ! दिशिदिशि जनाकीर्णभागेषु तत्र ।
तेषां प्राणाशनरसजुषां निष्कृपं निग्रहात् त्वं
दुर्दैवं तद् व्यपनय रयान्मार्गमध्ये जनानाम् ॥ २२ ॥

केदारान् द्विस्त्रिरपि सुतरां वापयोग्यान् समृद्ध्यै
कच्छानच्छानलिकुलिरयोः केलिरङ्गायमाणान् ।
नावो दण्डप्रकरघटिताः प्रेर्यमाणाश्च दाशै-
र्दर्शंदर्शं विहग ! सरितां तीरमार्गेण यायाः ॥ २३ ॥

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21. In the course of your journey in case playful boys happen to pursue you closely with the intention of catching hold of you, O, bird, you should then briskly turn back and jump at them, and frighten them away by spreading your plumage bent on striking hard at them in an angry mood.[7]

22· O, Peacock, in thickly populated areas there exist poisonous Cobras that are fierce and keen on biting pedestrians. By mercilessly destroying those that find pleasure in taking the lives of innocent people,you may in the course of your journey remove once for all this particular misfortune befalling the residents of those places.[8]

23. Observing at leisure the paddy fields around cultivated twice or even thrice a year for the sake of good produce, ponds in which beetles and crabs live, and the boats furnished with oars and manned by trained oars-men, you may O, bird, continue your journey on the banks of the rivulets that flow there silently.

वञ्चिक्षोण्यास्तिलकसदृशीं तां पुरीं प्रस्थिता सा
नौकाराशिस्तव सविधमायाति यावत् खगेन्द्र ! ।
दाशान् पापान् मधुरमदिरापानमत्तानशेषान्
कुल्याकूले स्थगितवपुषा वञ्चय त्वं सलीलम् ॥ २४ ॥

पर्णैर्नीलैस्तव गलतुलामावहन्तं नितान्तं
सालं स्थूलं विहग ! डयनात्तूर्णमारुह्य पश्चात् ।
श्रद्धोपेतं सपदि तरणेः कस्यचित् कूपदण्डं
प्राप्यालीनः स्थिरतरवपुस्तिष्ठ तस्याग्रतस्त्वम् ॥ २५ ॥

बुद्धिं कुर्याः कृतकखग इत्येव सम्प्रेक्षकाणां
तत्रासीनः प्रणिहितमतिर्निश्चलो नीरवश्च ।
उच्चैस्तस्मिन् गुणतरुवरे भासमानं युवानं
तीरे सन्तः कुतुकितहृदः कीर्तयेयुर्भवन्तम् ॥ २६ ॥

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24. As the group of boats, bound for Trivandrum, a shining ornament to the whole State of Vañci, comes near you, you may escape the notice of the oars-men inebriated with sweet toddy, by concealing yourself jovially on the bank of the rivulet ?

25. O, bird, then you fly quickly and reach some beautiful-palm tree which resembles your neck in its green colour, and from that tree standing on the river-bank carefully fly to reach the top of the mast of one of the boats that pass nearby and you may remain there firm and steady.

26. You remain on the top of that tall mast in complete self-possession, without making any movement or producing any sound and create an impression that you are but an artificial bird. O, friend, the curious on-lookers standing on either side of the river-bank will then praise you to the skies.[9]

मार्गे दूरे तदनु भवता तार्यमाणे स्वकीयं
भावं जातिप्रकृतिसहजं रोद्धुमश्रद्दधानः ।
मन्द्रं श्रुत्वा जलदनिनदं नर्तनायोद्यतश्चेत्
पक्षीन्द्र ! स्यादखिलमशुभोदर्कमित्याकुलोऽस्मि ॥ २७ ॥

श्रुत्वा दाशैरुदितवचनं 'पन्नगं' प्रत्यमन्दं
रोषावेशात् प्लवनकुतुकं मा कृथाः पन्नगारे ! ।
रागोन्मादात् सपदि वयसश्चित्रभोगार्थिनः स्या-
दापल्लाभः फलमिति चिरादाप्तवाक्यं स्मर त्वम् ॥ २८ ॥

कुल्यामार्गात् त्वरितमथ ते नौः प्रवाहानुकूलं
यान्ती शीघ्रं खगवर ! जलाधारमासादयेत् त्वाम् ।
उच्चैस्तत्र प्रकटितरसाः पौरमुख्याः सगीतं
यास्यन्तो ये वरतरणिभिस्तेऽक्षिलक्षीभवेयुः ॥ २९ ॥

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27. In the course of your negotiating the long difficult route to your destination, on hearing the clouds roar if you start dancing without caring to curb your natural tendency, I am afraid, O, Peacock, that the whole mission may end in failure.

28. On hearing the word "Pannaka" (denoting the upper part of a canoe in Malayalam) that might happen to be uttered by the oars-men, you should not, O, Peacock the enemy of the snakes, take a leap in wrath (mistaking the word to be "Pannaga" that means snake in Sanskrit). Mind you the old saying that the 'Vayas' (youth as well as bird) that goes mad after 'bhoga' (carnal pleasure as well as serpent) is bound to be landed in calamities.[10]

29. The boat moving according to the currents of the stream will take you quickly, to a panoramic back-water. On your way, O, pre-eminent bird, you will come across the people of the locality, who in a merry mood travel by beautiful boats singing songs in jubilation.

स्वैरं वीणानिनदमधुरं संलपन्तीभिरुच्चै-
श्चाटून्यन्तस्तरणि सरसं प्राणनाथाभिरग्रे ।
तीरं केरप्रकरहरितं वीक्ष्य संहृष्टचित्तान्
हूणोत्तंसान् नयनविषयीकृत्य तुष्टो भवेस्त्वम् ॥ ३० ॥

तुङ्गाकारां सरसि तरणीं वाह्यमानामरित्रै-
राटोपेन द्रुततरगतिं पश्यतस्ते तदानीम् ।
मैनाकोऽब्धेर्निजनिलयनात् पक्षपङ्क्ती प्रसार्य
क्षोणीमाप्तुं त्वरितमटतीत्यङ्ग ! शङ्कोदयः स्यात् ॥ ३१ ॥

दृष्ट्वा पश्चात् तरणिमपरं शीघ्रमेवापतन्तं
गन्तुं दाशा द्रुततरमलं चालयन्तः स्वदण्डान् ।
नौकां स्वीयां प्लवनचटुलां प्रेरयेयुः सघोषं
तोषोद्रेकादहमहमिकाचोद्यमानाः समानाः ॥ ३२ ॥

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30. It will also be a source of pleasure to you to see prominent Englishmen travelling on boats feasting their eyes on the green shades on the banks studded with coconut trees, in the company of their sweet-hearts speaking pleasing words in a voice as melodious as that of a violin.[11]

31. O, friend, as the matchless boat of mountainous dimension provided with a number of oars, on either side glides swiftly in the back-water in all pomp with wonderful speed, it would create in you an impression that Maināka mountain with its wings spread on both sides is moving fast from its mid-sea station to get back to earth, its original abode.[12]

32. Locating another boat following their own in great speed the oars-men in their anxiety to forge ahead with greater speed would ply their oars more quickly and tumultously in a spirit of keen competition.

तेषां दोषाबलभरजुषामुग्रकैवर्तकानां
गर्वोद्घोषैर्विजयकुतुकान्मत्सरे वर्धमाने ।
उद्गच्छन्तस्तरणिचलनादूर्मयो मज्जने ते
नावः शक्ताः स्युरिति नियतं चिन्त्यतां केकिवर्य ! ॥ ३३ ॥

आपन्ना स्याद्यदि तव तरी निर्भयस्त्वं तदानी-
मालम्बेथाः पतग ! डयने पाटवं जन्मसिद्धम् ।
त्रातुं प्राणांस्तदनु शबलं त्वत्पतत्रं प्रसार्य
प्राप्तो भूयाः कथमपि जवात् तज्जलाधारतीरम् ॥ ३४ ॥

उद्गच्छंस्त्वं सपदि डयनात्सन्निकृष्टाद्रिमौलिं
सम्प्राप्योच्चैस्तरुवरकुले तत्र जोषं निषण्णः ।
दूराद् द्रक्ष्यस्यहह ! सरसीमज्जनान्नष्टशोभां
द्रोणीं ! तस्याः पतग ! भवता भावुकं प्रार्थनीयम् ॥ ३५ ॥

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33. O, friend, you should particularly keep in mind that as the competition among those strong and formidable oars-men gathers momentum along with uproarious cries of intense longing for victory the waves that surge up in the quick movement of the boats may prove to be forcible enough to sink your boat in the back-water.

34. In case your canoe meets with such a mishap, O, dear bird, then without fear you should invoke for saving your life your natural instinct to fly spreading out your wings of variegated colours and somehow reach the bank of the backwaters pleasant on account of the shades of big trees.

35. Flying high fast you may reach the nearby hill and as you perch silently on one of the tall trees there you will see indistinctly your vessel sinking in water. From that distance O, bird, you may pray for its providential deliverence.

यस्मिन् मुग्धाश्चकितशशका वल्गु वल्गन्त्यजस्रं
तेनामोदात् सुरुचिरपथेनाशु तीरेण यास्यन् ।
केरोद्यानं पनसवनमप्यग्रतो वीक्ष्य केकिन् !
कोलम्बाख्यं प्रविश नगरं नातिदूरादुदारम् ॥ ३६ ॥

हूणश्रेष्ठः प्रतिनिधिरधीशस्य मानातिरेकात्
सौधोत्तंसे निवसति पुरा तत्र चेन्मित्रवर्गैः ।
वर्णैर्नैकैर्द्युपतिधनुषः खण्डवद् भासमाना
केतुस्तम्भे विहग ! विलसेच्चित्ररूपा पताका ॥ ३७ ॥

मध्वासक्तभ्रमरमुखरे निष्कुटे तत्र मोहात्
त्यक्त्वावेक्षां विहृतिनिरतः सञ्चरेच्चेद् भवन्तम् ।
बध्वा सार्धं समुदितरसादागमिष्यन् स हूणो
बध्वा कुर्यात् पतग ! कुतुकेनाञ्जसा पञ्जरस्थम् ॥ ३८ ॥

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36. Proceeding along the beautiful path on the bank of the backwater, where always skim the young ones of the hare in a playful mood, you will see extensive coconut groves and jack-tree gardens. Going ahead further O, Peacock, you may enter the magnificent city of Quilon after negotiating a short distance.[13]

37. In that city if the British Resident happens to stay in all pomp in his grand mansion, along with his own people, O, bird there will flutter on the mast the multi-coloured flag that looks like a part of the rainbow.[14]

38. Having entered the gardens which resound with the humming of the bees come to suck the floral honey, if you move about unguarded in a playful mood O, bird, the Resident who might come that way in all joy, accompanied by his wife, may immediately shut you up in a cage for the sake of fancy.

खाद्यं हृद्यं प्रियतरविनोदश्च संसेत्स्यतीति
स्वीयैर्भृत्यैस्त्वरितममुना मृग्यमाणे शरण्ये ।
याया दूरे विहग ! यदि नो मृत्युमेष्यस्यकाले
तेषां न स्यात् सुनलिकजुषां लक्ष्यवेधे प्रमादः ॥ ३९ ॥

रम्ये तस्मिन्नुपवनतले नन्दनश्रीविलासे
स्वच्छन्दं त्वं युवखग ! सुखास्वादने लालसश्चेत् ।
मार्गोपान्तेष्वटनकुतुकात् सन्निवृत्यावृतात्मा
सान्द्रच्छाये रहसि भवता स्थीयतां कुञ्जमध्ये ॥ ४० ॥

मल्लीजातिप्रभृतिकुसुमैर्मुग्धहासा लतास्त्वां
सल्लीलाभिः किसलयकरैरङ्ग ! संवाहयेयुः ।
वल्लीनां त्वं परिचयरसादात्तरागेण तासा-
मुल्लीढात्मा मयि तु कृपया मा विलम्बस्व केकिन् ! ॥ ४१ ॥

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39. With the prospect of securing relishing food as well as interesting pastime the Resident accompanied by his fellow-men will be searching for prey in that vast garden. O, friend, you should, then keep away from their sight lest you meet with untimely death. Mind you, provided with good guns as they are, they will never miss their aim.

40. O, young and pretty bird, if you are inclined to have some free enjoyment in that garden which is as attractive as the Nandana (the celestial garden), you should abandon your craze for way-side wanderings and wait in a lonely place calmly concealed in some beautiful bower.

41. There in that bower, creepers will shine forth in smiles of blooming flowers like Mallī and Jāti and sportive as they are, with their hands of tender leaves will caress you gently. Fascinated by the pleasures of their company you should not stay there long. O, Peacock, please take pity on me and move forward.

हत्वा कुञ्जं सुममधु पिबंस्तत्र सोल्लासमाराद्
भुञ्जानस्त्वं तरुफलतति पत्रघातैरुपात्ताम् ।
गच्छन् पश्चात् त्वरितगतिराश्रामधाम्नि प्रविष्टः
कृत्वा साक्षात् कमलनयनं कामतातं भजेथाः ॥ ४२ ॥

सुश्राव्यैस्तैर्नियततुमुलैश्चानकध्वानघोषै-
र्मिश्रा नादस्वरविसृमरा काकली केकिराज ! ।
तुष्टिं पुष्टां श्रवणयुगलस्याशु दद्यात् तदानीं
विश्रान्त्यर्थं तव यदि भवेत् तत्र वासो दिनान्ते ॥ ४३ ॥

नन्दन्नानासुजननयनानन्दमुच्चैर्वितन्व-
न्नुड्डीयातस्त्वरितमपरं धीर ! तीरं प्रपन्नः ।
चन्द्रस्मेराननमतिलसन्मातुरानन्दवल्ल्याः
पादाब्जं त्वं भज भगवतश्चन्द्रचूडामणेश्च ॥ ४४ ॥

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42. Leaving the bower O, friend, you may proceed hilariously, drinking the floral honey and eating lots of fruits that fall struck with your plumes. Continuing your journey at an enhanced speed reach the sacred temple at Āśrāma and worship, Lord Kṛṣṇa actually seeing that divinity with your mortal eyes.[15]

43. If you choose to stay there in the evening for the sake of rest, O, friend, the melodious music in the temple mixed with the highly pleasing sound of the musical instruments including the pipe, will gladden your ears to the highest degree possible.

44. You may O, **Peacock**, fly again fast causing delight to the eyes of the curious onlookers and reach the opposite bank of the back-water. There you may pray at the holy feet of the Supreme Mother Ānandavallī, shining with her smiling face. You may also worship at the holy feet of her spouse Lord Śiva installed there.[16]

सक्तं नृत्ते परमहिभुजं नीलकण्ठं खगाना-
मुत्तंसत्वं दधतमखिलैः साधुभिः स्तूयमानम् ।
चित्ते नित्यं शरवणभवे प्रेमवन्तं भवन्तं
दृष्ट्वा सन्तः पतग ! सविधे तत्र तुष्टिं व्रजेयुः ॥ ४५ ॥

बद्ध्वा मध्ये रुचिरवसनं कञ्चुकं चापि धृत्वा
सोष्णीषास्ते नृपतिपुरुषाश्छत्रवन्तश्च हस्ते ।
कृत्वा पादू चरणयुगले तत्र कार्यालयान् द्राग्
गच्छन्तस्त्वन्मनसि कुतुकं दोहयेयुः खगेन्द्र ! ॥ ४६ ॥

दृष्टे 'कोल्ले'सपदि रुचिरे तत्र वासाभिलाषाद्
विस्मर्येत स्वगृहमिति यद् वाक्यमाप्तं न वादः ।
सोऽयं देशः प्रतिनवपरिष्कारजालैरुदारै-
रुल्लङ्घ्योच्चैर्जयति महतीं राजधानीमिदानीम् ॥ ४७ ॥

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45. O, bird par-exeellence, those good people who assemble there will derive great satisfaction on closely seeing you, immensely fond of dancing, destroyer of snakes, remarkable for blue-tinged neck, praised by all noble men and holding Skanda always in deep reverence.[17]

46. There in the Quilon city the sight of the officials who go to their respective offices, wearing turban, clad in attractive shut-coat and with slippers on their feet will interest you O, bird, very much.

47. The saying that on seeing the illustrious city of Quilon one getting fascinated to live there would forget even his own home, is nothing but true. With years of rapid progress on modern lines that city now surpasses even the renowned capital of the State.

अक्लान्ताभैः पतग ! विततैर्मन्दिरश्रेणिभिस्तैः
स्नानायाच्छस्फटिककमलैश्चारुपद्माकरैश्च ।
तौल्यातीतप्रचुरवसुभिर्वृद्धिभिः पण्यवीथ्या-
स्तत्रावासः सुखतर इति प्रत्ययः सज्जनानाम् ॥ ४८ ॥

शृङ्गैरुच्चैर्द्युतलमनिशं लेलिहानेषु तत्र
प्राकारेषु प्रणयभरिताः सन्ततानन्दभाजः ।
लोलाक्षीभिर्विजितरतिभिर्वष्मकान्त्या नितान्तं
क्रीडेयुर्ये सरसमभिका भाग्यवन्तस्त एव ॥ ४९ ॥

विद्यावेश्मान्यथ च विततं तत्र योधाधिवासं
कारागारं गदहरगृहं यावनं धर्मगेहम् ।
शालां साधुद्विजपरिषदां भोजनार्थां पुरान्ते
वीक्षेथास्त्वं वियति विचरन्नेषु संलग्नचक्षुः ॥ ५० ॥

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48. They believe that it is indeed a comfortable place to live in on account of the extensive rows of mansions of unfading beauty, bathing pools of clear water, and the commercial streets prosperous due to unlimited flow of wealth.

49. O, friend, blessed indeed are those lovers who in all happiness live in those mansions with domes touching the sky, and indulge in amorous sports, with beautiful damsels who eclipse even Rati in physical charm.

50. Flying aloft in the sky, with your eyes fixed on objects below you will come to see in that city schools, extensive barracks, penitentiary, hospital, church and choultry for Brahmins.

योद्धारश्च प्रकृतिपरुषा लक्ष्यहीनं चरन्तः
संरुध्येयुर्यदि तु वनितास्तत्र संबाधमार्गे ।
तासां न स्यादवमतिरिति क्रोधघोषेण तेषां
कर्णातङ्कं झटिति कुरु भोः रक्षणीया हि नार्यः ॥ ५१ ॥

तत्रानेके फणिभिरवरैर्यान्ति मृत्युं जनास्त-
त्तेषामन्तं स्वकुलसदृशं चञ्चुघातैः कुरुष्व ।
ईष्टे कर्तुं परहितमपि स्वार्थकारी भृशं यः
सेवासक्तः खगवर ! स एवात्र धीरो धरित्र्याम् ॥ ५२ ॥

श्रीमत्त्वेन प्रियखग ! जगत्प्राणमाहृत्य नित्यं
सामर्थ्यादप्यहिभयमुपाकल्प्य भूमीपतेश्च ।
कौटिल्यात्तं नियतमभितः सञ्चरन्तं द्विजिह्व-
स्तोमं प्रत्यस्त्वयि तव सखे ! साध्वबाधो विरोधः ॥ ५३ ॥

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51. In case, wandering soldiers who are ruffians by nature, happen to misbehave towards ladies in the bye-lanes there you O, bird, should in angry voice shout breaking the ears of those miscreants lest the virtuous be insulted. Ladies, indeed deserve protection.[18]

52. There a large number of people die bitten by wicked snakes. Therefore, O, noble one, you must put an end to those natural enemies of yours with your sharp beak. O, distinguished bird, he alone is wise in this world who inspired by a spirit of service succeeds in doing good to others, in the course of discharging his own duty.[19]

53. O, friendly bird, it will only be legitimate for a noble soul like you to hate the band of the double-tongued people there who resemble snakes in many respects. On account of prosperity the double-tongued harass the people while the poisonous snakes live upon wind. The double-tongued again cause terror to the king from his own kith and kin while the snakes cause the fear of death to the people. For want of loyalty the double-tongued behave in a crooked manner while the snakes being unstable move crookedly.[20]

केकिन् ! दृष्ट्वा नगरमचिरात् प्राप्य नावं च काञ्चिद्
गुप्तस्तस्यामपगतभयं भूरिदूरं प्रयास्यन् ।
तीर्त्वा गुल्मानपि च विपुलां चारुकेदारभूमिं
पुण्यक्षेत्रेष्वसुलभतुलां वर्कलां प्राप्नुयास्त्वम् ॥ ५४ ॥

अद्रौ वृक्षप्रकरनिबिडे तत्र सर्वार्थधाम्नो
द्रष्टव्यं स्यात् खगवर ! महामन्दिरं कैटभारेः ।
प्रख्यातं तद् विमलहृदयैर्वैष्णवैः सेव्यमानं
प्रत्यग्राभं लसति कनकस्तूपिकादीपिताशम् ॥ ५५ ॥

देशे तत्र प्रसरतितरां निर्झरो दर्शनीय-
स्तीरे वीचिप्रहरमुखरस्याम्बुराशेरदूरे ।
स्थाने केकिन् ! गदहरगुणैर्धातुजातैर्विशिष्टे
लोकास्तस्मिन् विमलसलिले प्रीतिमन्तो भवन्ति ॥ ५६ ॥

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54. Having seen the city of Quilon you should without wasting time reach some boat (bound to the South) and travel a long distance remaining unnoticed and thus free from fear. Crossing beautiful fields and jungles you may reach Varkalā a unique place of worship.[21]

55. There on the hill, studded with green trees, you will see the great temple of Lord Kṛiṣṇa, the abode of the whole universe. The magnificent temple well known throughout the world and resorted to for worship especially by Vaishnavates of spotless heart shines forth with golden cones that illumine the quarters.

56. Not far from there on the shore of the sea that resounds with dashing breakers, freely flows a beautiful stream. It is but proper that people have got fascinated with its pure water known for its medicinal properties due to the presence of mineral content.

वर्षाजातैर्विहग ! विकटैर्वीचिभिर्वारिराशे-
राक्रान्तं तद्गिरितटमधः प्रेक्षणीयं हि शृङ्गात् ।
कालेऽतीते शिखरपतनैरुत्कटैः प्रापितास्ते
कालागारं निरवधिजना हन्त ! दुर्दैवभाजः ॥ ५७ ॥

देवागारं गिरिवरशिरस्यास्थितं प्राप्य पश्चा-
दानम्रस्त्वं हरिमरिदमं देवदेवं भजस्व ।
नागान् पूज्यान् महितवटवृक्षस्य मूले स्थितांस्ता-
नाक्रम्य त्वं फणिगणधिया पापलिप्तो न भूयाः ॥ ५८ ॥

नीहाराभं निरुपमरसं नीरमास्वाद्य घासां-
श्चाहृत्याच्छान् दिनमनु गतक्लेशमीशस्य शौरेः ।
गेहोपान्तेष्वलसचरणैः स्वैरसञ्चारशीलो
माहासङ्घस्तव नयनयोस्तोषकारी भवेत् सः ॥ ५९ ॥

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57. From the summit of the hill you may take a view of the beautiful beach below which is washed by huge waves from the troubled sea during rainy season. Alas! in days of old hundreds of unlucky people met with their end as the ridges at the top fell steeply down in all force.

58. Then you may proceed quickly to the sacred temple and worship Lord Hari, God supreme, who destroys the enemies of His devotees. There, at the bottom of the banyan tree live the holy snakes by attacking whom under the mistaken notion that they are ordinary serpents, you should not acquire sin.[22]

59. Hordes of cows that wander about there slowly at leisure drinking water as pure as snow and eating tender grass growing in the green meadows in the sacred precincts of the holy temple of Lord Hari will O, bird, bring delight to your eyes in an abundant measure.

शोभापूरप्रसरमहितं कञ्जनाभस्य बिम्बं
धृत्वा शीर्षे क्षितिसुरवरस्तन्त्रिवर्यस्तदा याम् ।
दिव्यां यात्रां कलयति शनैः कान्तिपूरं तदीयं
पीत्वा दृष्ट्या कृतिवर ! चिरं मज्ज हर्षाम्बुराशौ ॥ ६० ॥

पुण्यक्षेत्रात् प्रियखग ! बहिस्तत्र सान्द्रप्ररोह-
तृण्यक्षोणीपरिसरदिशि प्रेक्षणीयोऽग्रहारः ।
गुण्यानां सुग्रथितविदुषां श्रोत्रियाग्रेसराणां
गण्याभानामतिशुचिधियामङ्ग ! धात्रीसुराणाम् ॥ ६१ ॥

तस्माद् गच्छेरनुगिरिवरं यत्र कारुप्रवेकः
कुल्यार्थं तं खनति सहसा हूणवंशावतंसः ।
निस्तुल्या सा जगति निखिले यत्समाप्तौ तरण्या
निर्बाधं स्याद्विहग ! नियतं राजधानीप्रयाणम् ॥ ६२ ॥

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60. The chief among the temple priests will lead the holy procession, carrying on his head the sacred idol of Lord Hari admirable on account of its unlimited lustre. O, most lucky bird, as you enjoy the matchless beauty of that procession you will feel like floating in an ocean of mirth.

61. O, bird, outside the holy temple where grass grows in plenty it will be a pleasant experience for you to see the street where dwell Brahmins of pure-mind and of noble qualities. They are great scholars too well-versed in Vedic lore.

62. From there you may go to the hill which an engineer who is an Englishman bores for constructing a tunnel matchless in the whole world. When completed it would make the journey to Trivandrum possible by boat alone without any hindrance.[23]

द्रष्टव्यं यत्सकलमपि तद्वीक्ष्य चोड्डीय काञ्चिद्
द्रोणीमारात् कुतुकितधिया तूर्णमारुह्य यास्यन् ।
वीतायासं त्रिचतुरघटीकालमात्रेण केकिन् !
श्रीलं वेळि प्रकृतिरुचिरं सत्सरस्तत्र पश्येः ॥ ६३ ॥

यत्र क्रीडारसभरितधीर्यौवनस्योदये स-
न्मित्रैः साकं बहुतिथमहं नीतवान् कालमङ्ग ! ।
मेघव्रातः प्रतनुविभवो नीरमादातुकामः
साकल्येनागत इव महाप्रस्तरौघोऽस्ति तत्र ॥ ६४ ॥

शैलोपान्ते मृगवरगणैस्तत्र राजद्वनान्तं
गत्वा मोदात्सह मृगयुभिश्चाहमुन्मेषशाली ।
चित्रान् व्याघ्रान् किटिवरगणांश्चापि हत्वातिवेलं
तुष्टोऽभूवं; प्रियखग ! रसोऽद्यापि तस्मिन् महान्मे ॥ ६५ ॥

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63. After feasting your eyes with everything that is beautiful and adorable there, O, Peacock, you may board a boat in good spirits without any delay. Travelling by that boat at ease for about three to four hours you will see the famous Veḷi backwater of great natural beauty.[24]

64. On the banks of that lake are huge rocks which look like a big group of clouds that come down anxiously to drink water from the vast lake. In my youth, accompanied by my bosom friends, I had spent there many a happy day of active sporting.

65. In the forest full of animals on the side of the hillock, I had gone in sportive enthusiasm along with other huntsmen and enjoyed, chasing and killing numerous leopards and boars. My interest, O, friend, in that game of hunting is still great.

विश्रम्याल्पं तदनु भवता यास्यता नातिदूरं
लक्ष्यन्ते ते किलिकिलिरवास्तालवृक्षाः प्ररूढाः ।
वञ्चिक्षोणीवलरिपुपुरप्रान्तदेशं प्रपत्तुं
सोत्कण्ठस्त्वं खगवर ! जवान्नावमापृच्छ्य गच्छेः ॥ ६६ ॥

तालान् प्रांशून् पवनतरलानन्यवृक्षांश्च तांस्तान्
पर्यायेणोड्डयनगतिना प्राप्य सन्तुष्टचेताः ।
लीलासौधेष्वतुलितरसं वासमास्वाद्य च त्वं
निस्तन्द्रस्तां प्रविश महतीं राजधानीं खगेन्द्र ! ॥ ६७ ॥

विष्णोर्वक्षोभुवि सततमास्थाय लक्ष्म्याः प्रमोदा-
न्नृत्यन्त्यास्तैर्बहुविलसनैरात्तसौभाग्यलक्ष्मीम् ।
श्लाघ्यां वञ्चिक्षितिवरपुरीं गाहितस्याग्रतस्ते
दृश्यानि स्युर्नयनमधुराण्यङ्ग ! गण्येतराणि ॥ ६८ ॥

मयूरदूते पूर्वभागः समाप्तः ।

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66. As you proceed after seeing that beautiful place you will see tall palm trees whose leaves produce the 'Kilikila' sound. Anxious as you will be to reach the capital of the Vañcī ruler you may bid farewell to the boat and continue the journey by road.

67. Flying in mirth from one tree to another, palm trees as well as the others that shake in the wind, and delightfully staying on the terrace of the wayside mansions you may enter that great capital city without any delay.

68. In that illustrious city that has acquired great prosperity as Lakṣmī the goddess of wealth dances there in all glory on the bosom of Lord Viṣṇu, O, good friend, innumerable objects delightful to your eyes will present themselves to you one after another.[25]

Thus ends Part One of The Peacock-Messenger

मयूरदूतम्

THE PEACOCK–MESSENGER

उत्तरभागः

श्रीलास्येन प्रसृमररुचा नूनमन्तःस्थितानां
लोलाक्षीणां घनकचभरेणाङ्ग ! बर्होपमेन ।
नीलाश्मश्रीविलसिततलेनापि ते कण्ठभासा
लीलासौधप्रकरतुलितस्त्वं भवेस्तत्र पुर्याम् ॥ १ ॥

नारीरत्नैर्विहग ! महितैर्मन्दिरैः सान्द्रशोभै-
रुद्यानैश्च प्रचुरकुसुमैर्भूषिता राजधानी ।
गीर्वाणानामसमसुषमं पत्तनं पश्चिमाब्धौ
साङ्गोपाङ्गं प्रतिफलितमित्याशु बुद्धिं विदध्यात् ॥ २ ॥

PART II

1. In that city, O, my friend, the long row of mansions with their beautiful appearance, the dark tresses of the charming ladies who reside in them and the blue coloured floor will measure up to you noted for exquisite dancing, full-blown back plumes and blue neck.[1]

2. That capital city shining forth with beautiful ladies, clusters of magnificent buildings and gardens full of flowers will at once create an impression in you O, bird, that it is but a eflection of the illustrious city of gods, in the western sea.[2]

वामास्तत्र त्वरितमसितापाङ्गशूलेन यूनां
भित्त्वा चित्तं तरलितधियां विभ्रमैर्वञ्चितानाम् ।
सन्नद्धां तत्कुहरनिहितां धीरतां चोरयित्वा
कुर्वन्त्येनानतनुविवशीभावखिन्नानमन्दम् ॥ ३ ॥

वृत्रारातेर्महितनगरे नन्दनोद्यानरम्ये
चित्राकारा लसति सुचिराच्चित्रमेकैव रम्भा ।
पत्रावल्या लसितवपुषः पन्नगाधीशपुर्यां
तत्रारम्याः खगवर ! नवा भान्त्यनेका हि रम्भाः ॥ ४ ॥

सौवर्णाभैः कुसुमनिचयैर्भासिते दन्तमञ्चे
रागोद्रेकात्सरसमुपविश्यात्मनाथा युवानः ।
आलिङ्ग्यारादमितकुतुकात्सन्निवेश्याङ्कदेशे
वक्षोजामर्दनमपि मुहुस्तन्वते तत्र पुर्याम् ॥ ५ ॥

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3. The damsels there deceive the unsophisticated young men with lovely flutterings, break open their hearts with the lances of side-glances, steal away the wealth of courage safely kept in them and finally render their victims extremely helpless in a love-stricken plight.

4. In the capital city of the king of gods captivating on account of the Nandana garden, there exists from time immemorial only one Rambhā of exquisite beauty. But in Anantaśayana, the capital city of Vañci kings, there flourish many a modern Rambhā decorated beautifully with *patras*. O, what a wonder![3]

5. There the young lovers seated on beautiful ivory couches embellished with golden flowers, embrace their sweet-hearts placed in their laps and lovingly press their breast to their heart'a content.

मारक्रीडामहमयरणे जालमार्गेण लीला-
गारक्रोडे निभृतचलनं प्राप्य नित्यं निशायाम् ।
वारस्त्रीणां वपुषि विलसत्स्वेदबिन्दूपनद्धं
हारस्तोमं हरति चतुरस्तत्र चोरः समीरः ॥ ६ ॥

लीलोद्याने सुरभिलतरैः केतकीधूलिजालै-
र्वाताधातात्परिसरसृतैः सङ्कुले सारसाक्ष्यः ।
आलीलोकप्रकृतदयितोदन्तमाकर्ण्य रागाद्
व्रीलावत्यः पुलकभरितास्तत्र मन्दं चरन्ति ॥ ७ ॥

अन्यूनाभाः कुसुमरसिकाः कोमलाङ्ग्योऽतिवेलं
श्रद्धावत्यः करकिसलयैस्तत्र मोदान्नगर्याम् ।
आरामेषु प्रियखग ! लसत्पुष्पवृक्षावलीनां
सम्पोषाय क्रममनु भृशं कुर्वते चोपचारम् ॥ ८ ॥

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6. Amidst the tumult of amorous sports in that city the gentle breeze stealthily enters the chamber of lovers regularly during night and like a thief takes away the chains of pearls consisting of the harlots' sweat.[4]

7. In the gardens there strewn with fragrant ketaki-dust due to the gently waving breeze, love-lorn ladies attending to the accounts of their sweet-hearts from lady friends feel shy and wander leisurely experiencing horripilation.

8. O, dear bird, there ladies of exquisite beauty enamoured of flowers nourish plants regularly in their gardens with their young tender hands taking great care so that they may flourish.

पुर्यां तस्यां जलधरनिभं तुङ्गमातङ्गयूथं
दृष्ट्वा पान्थाः सपदि विधुराः स्वाधिवेशं विशेयुः ।
तं चालोक्य प्रियसख ! शनैर्मार्गमध्ये चरन्तं
सन्तुष्टिः स्यान्मनसि नितरां कालिकाशङ्कया ते ॥ ९ ॥

उष्णीषेण प्रवरकवचेनापि निस्तुल्यभासा
खड्गेनापि प्रचुरतरदीप्रेण सम्भूषितेन ।
आटोपाढ्यं कटकटरवं सादिभिर्नीयमानो
वाजिव्रातः प्लवनगमनैर्नन्दयेत् त्वाममन्दम् ॥ १० ॥

चन्द्रास्याभिर्मणिनिलयतो वीक्ष्यमाणं गवाक्षा-
दिन्द्राभिख्यैः प्रमुखपुरुषैश्चासितं शिल्परम्यम् ।
मन्द्रध्वानैरनुकृतघनोद्घोषणं स्यन्दनौघं
त्वं द्रष्टासि प्रसृमरमुदा मेघनादानुलासिन् ! ॥ ११ ॥

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9. On seeing the huge Tuskers in that city moving slowly on the public road, mistaking them for a chain of clouds the lovers in separation return to their houses in great haste. Under the same notion you O, dear friend, will naturally be greatly elated to see them.[5]

10. Further, the mounted troops with their colourful costumes as well as helmets and holding gleaming swords in their hands and gallopping forward in all pomp emanating tumultuous sounds will make you O, dear friend, feel over-joyed in that city.6

11. You will see with great pleasure the beautiful charriots carrying prominent citizens of Indra's countenance, and observed by women of moonlike faces through the windows of the roadside mansions, as they ply along the road producing sound that would resemble the thunder of the clouds, on hearing which O, Peocock, you spontarously begin to dance.

नानावर्णैर्नयनमधुरैरुज्ज्वलद्योधवेषैः
सेनावृन्दं प्रचरपरिवृत्त्युद्यतं वीक्षमाणाः ।
उत्पश्येयुः सपदि पथिकाश्चापमैन्द्रं धरायां
जागर्तीति प्रियखग ! तदेत्यात्मना तर्कयामि ॥ १२ ॥

दृष्ट्वा चैतन्निखिलमचिराद्राजदुर्गस्य पूर्व-
द्वारेण त्वं प्रथितनगरीं तां प्रविश्येष्टलब्ध्यै ।
पारेवाग्वर्तिनमुदधिजाधिष्ठितोरःस्थलं तं
कृत्वा साक्षात् प्रणतवरदं पद्मनाभं भजस्व ॥ १३ ॥

कारागाराकलितविबुधं दैत्यराजं निहन्तुं
घोराकारादमितभयदं मर्त्यलोकेऽवतीर्णम् ।
पारावारादतिगुरुरवं भक्तलोकानुकम्पा-
पूराधारायितहृदयमाराधयारान्नृसिंहम् ॥ १४ ॥

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12. I imagine that as the soldiers clad in colourful military uniform round the corner in the course of their march on the public road, the on-lookers would wonder whether Indra's bow has descended on the earth straight from the sky.[7]

13. After enjoying all these sights you may O, blessed bird, proceed quickly and enter the celebrated capital city by the eastern gate of its fort and for the success of your mission you may worship with head bent in devotion the indescribable Śrī Padmanābha, just in your front on whose divine chest is stationed Lakṣmī the goddess of wealth.

14. Next you may worship Lord Narasiṁha installed nearby, an incarnation with an awe-inspiring form to destroy the king of demons who shut the gods in prison. His voice is louder than the roaring of the sea while his heart is the abode of great mercy for his devotees.

संसाराम्भोनिधिसुतरणायोद्यतानां समेषां
पुंसां पापैर्विरहितधिया सर्वदा सेव्यमानम् ।
तं सारार्थं निगमवचसां तत्त्वमस्यादिमानां
कंसारातिं कलय कलुषध्वंसनं त्वं विभूत्यै ॥ १५ ॥

कर्तुं रक्षां निखिलभुवनस्यास्य जातो गवां य-
श्चक्रे रक्षां पतग ! कुतुकात्तस्य गोपस्य शौरेः ।
भक्त्या बर्हं किमपि पदयोरर्पयोपायनं त-
न्मौलौ दध्यादतुलितकृपं भक्तदासः स नूनम् ॥ १६ ॥

स्वच्छन्दं त्वं तदनु भगवन्मन्दिरप्रान्तभूमौ
स्वच्छश्रीमद्गृहततिपथेनाशु भक्त्या विनम्रः ।
गच्छन् कूपोत्करमठगतामाश्रितानां समेषा-
मिच्छापूर्त्यै विहग ! वरदां तत्र वन्दस्व दुर्गाम् ॥ १७ ॥

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15. For the sake of auspiciousness you may then pay homage to Lord Kṛṣṇa the destroyer of sins, whom those who yearn to cross the ocean of mundane life always worship with a pure mind as he is the essence of the vedic sayings like *tattvamasi* (that art thou).[8]

16. At the holy feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa who incarnated himself for the protection of the whole world and who evinced keen interest in tending cattle, O, bird, you offer one of your plumes: a humble servant of his devotees as he is, he will certainly adorn his head with it in great mercy.

17. Leaving the temple and leisurely proceeding along the lane on whose sides exist highly clean houses, you may with devotion worship goddess Durgā at Kūpakkaramaṭha who bestows boons profusely on her devotees fulfilling all of their desires.

देवारातिक्षपणनिपुणां तामुपास्यार्तबन्धुं
क्षेमार्थं मे प्रचलतु भवान् पश्चिमाशां सतोषम् ।
रथ्यापार्श्वे विहग ! नचिराल्लक्ष्यते राजकीयं
मत्प्रेयस्याः प्रथितभवनं देवहाराभिधानम् ॥ १८ ॥

तुङ्गश्रीमद्धवलसुषमं सिंहयुग्मान्तरस्थे-
नाकल्पेनप्रचुररुचिना शङ्खरत्नेन रम्यम् ।
द्वारं दृष्ट्वा पथि परिलसच्चन्द्रशालान्तराले
जानीयास्तत् पतग ! नरलोकेन्दिरामन्दिरं त्वम् ॥ १९ ॥

आर्द्रीभूतेष्वमलसलिलैरालवालेषु रम्यै-
र्वृक्षोत्तंसैः खगवर ! लसत्पुष्पवाटचातिहृद्यम् ।
शिल्पौदार्ये सुरपतिगृहेणापि नम्यं च नित्यं
निस्तुल्याभं लसति नितरां मत्प्रियासौधरत्नम् ॥ २० ॥

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18. Having worshiped that goddess, the helper of the suffering people and powerful enough to destroy the enemies of gods you may gladly go westward for my sake. Within a very short time you will see on the road-side the well-known royal residence Devahāra (Tevāra) belonging to my beloved.

19. On seeing the high snow-white imposing gate made attractive with the decorative conch between two lions in sculpture and shining between the terrace-work on either side, on the road, you may recognise it as the palace of my beloved the very goddess of prosperity born on earth.

20. Highly fascinating on account of gardens with the basins of plants moist with regular watering, creepers full of flowers, and the palatial building that deserves the homage of heavenly mansions in architectural beauty, O, bird, the royal residence of my beloved shines forth in all glory.

उड्डीयोच्चैर्भवनवलभौ संस्थितेन त्वया स-
म्पुष्टाभं तन्मणिमयगृहं वीक्ष्य शिल्पिप्रवेकाः ।
चातुर्येण त्वरितमनुकृत्य प्रतिच्छायया ते
दास्यन्त्याभामभिनवतरामङ्ग ! सौधान्तराणाम् ॥ २१ ॥

प्राणेशित्र्या मम हितकरे चारुसौधे विभाति
स्फीताभोगं शबलमुकुरश्रेणिकल्पृप्तं कपाटम् ।
भासामुच्चैस्तरविसरणेनाङ्ग ! ते पिञ्छभार-
श्रीमादृश्यं वहति सुतरां तत्तु सौन्दर्यधुर्यम् ॥ २२ ॥

प्रत्यग्रश्रीभरितभवनस्यास्मदीयप्रियायाः
प्रत्यग्भागे लसति सुजला चारुवापी निकामम् ।
नित्यं तस्याः सुभगवपुषः स्पर्शभाग्यातिरेका-
दत्यन्तं तद्रुचिरसलिलायाम्यसूयामि केकिन् ! ॥ २३ ॥

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21. Observing the dome of that grand palace to which you retire after an upward flight, the distinguished architects of that place will skilfully carve your image and with it lend fresh charm to other buildings as well.[9]

22. In that palace built to suit the taste of my beloved there exist splendid doors of large size panelled with multi-coloured glass shutters. With the rays they profusely shed outside they would appear to assume the grace of your plumes.

23. Behind that magnificent palace belonging to my beloved there is an attractive pond of extremely pure water. I do envy very much its extremely fortunate waters for their great privilege of coming in contact with her body every day.

अस्तालस्यं मम दयितया स्फीतवात्सल्यपूर्वं
हस्ताब्जाभ्यां नियतमुपचारेण संवर्ध्यमानः ।
तत्रोद्याने विलसति नवेष्वालवालेषु पुष्ट्या
शस्ताभिख्यः परिमलमिलत्पुष्पवल्लीसमूहः ॥ २४ ॥

बालानामप्युदितकुतुकादुद्यताभ्यां कराभ्यां
प्राप्यैः स्वाद्यैर्निरुपमरुचा लम्बमानैः फलौघैः ।
सौधोपान्ते विहग ! विलसद्बालमाकन्दवृक्षाः
सर्वेषामप्युपचितरसं तत्र तन्वन्ति चेतः ॥ २५ ॥

आमूलाग्रं सुफलनिविडं चारुशाखाभिराढ्यं
बालत्वेऽपि प्रचुरविभवं प्रेक्षकैः कीर्त्यमानम् ।
छायारम्यं पनसगणमत्यद्भुतश्रीनिधानं
प्रीत्या पश्येरसुलभमिलामण्डलेऽन्यत्र केकिन् ! ॥ २६ ॥

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24. The well-known flowering creepers nurtured by my beloved's own hand with great care grow in profusion in their newly provided basins in the palace garden radiating their sweet fragrance all around.

25. The young mango trees growing in the precincts of the palace with bunches of fruits hanging down gracefully so low that even longing children could pluck them with their lifted hands, fill everybody's mind with excessive joy.[10]

26. You will also see the gardens of rare jack trees full of fruits from top to bottom, praised by the onlookers for their growth in spite of their being too young, and extremely pleasant on account of their large shades.

रूपे गर्वादुदितकलहे मत्प्रियायाः सुजाता-
दूरुद्वन्द्वादधिगतपराभूति शोकाब्धिमग्नम् ।
आरुद्धं सद् वहिरुपवने तत्र मोचाकदम्बं
भीतित्रस्तं वसति सुचिराज्जातजाल्यं नितान्तम् ॥ २७ ॥

सारामोदप्रसवनिकरः सञ्चरत्सत्समीरो
धारालोद्यत्सुमधुरफलः कीरसंरावरम्यः ।
पारातीतप्रतिनवलतागारशोभः समन्ता-
दारामस्ते मुदमतितरामावहेदिन्द्रियाणाम् ॥ २८ ॥

प्रीतस्तिष्ठेत् खग! यदि भवांस्तत्र किञ्चिद् दिनान्ते
नत्वा स्कन्दं गिरिशसुतमुल्लूरदेशाददूरात् ।
प्रत्यायान्तीं मम सहचरीं वीक्ष्य वञ्चीश्वरीं तां
साफल्यं स्यात्तव नयनयोः पुण्यभाजोस्तदानीम् ॥ २९ ॥

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27. In the periphery of the gardens, plantain trees (rambhās) in plenty remain in intense shame, grief and fear as if they are forcibly restrained as captives being vanquished in a battle for supremacy in shape by the well formed thighs of my beloved.

28. The garden with extremely fragrant flowers, gentle breeze, plenty of sweet fruits, melodious music of the parrot and innumerable green bowers will afford great mirth to all of your sense organs (nose, skin, tongue, ears and eyes).[11]

29. In case you remain there in good humour on account of their great religious merits your eyes will come to gain their earthly end on seeing my wife the queen of the Vañci royal family, as she returns from Ullūr a well known village in the outskirts of of Trivandrum, after worshipping at the Skanda temple in the evening.[12]

आगत्यारादुपचितजवं स्यन्दनेनात्मगेहं
यावद् यानादवतरति सा देहलीं मोहनाङ्गी ।
तावत्तस्याः सुललिततनूवल्लिराकाशमार्गाद्
भूमिं यान्ती तटिदिव सखे ! प्रेक्षणीया भवेत्ते ॥ ३० ॥

साध्वीमौलिं विमलरुचिरस्फारसौन्दर्यसारां
भूक्षिद्वंशप्रथिततिलकां प्रेयसीमस्मदीयाम् ।
द्रष्टुं योगश्चिरमसुलभस्ते तदा स्याद्यतः सा
धर्मासक्त्या सपदि विधिवद् व्याप्रियेत व्रतेषु ॥ ३१ ॥

आरब्धां मत्परिणयदिनाद् वल्लभा मद्विभूतिं
गाढप्रेम्णा नियतमभिलष्याङ्ग ! मङ्गल्यपूजाम् ।
कृत्वा तिष्ठेन्निखिलवरदं वञ्चिभूपालकानां
प्रेष्ठं देवं हृदयकमले पद्मनाभं भजन्ती ॥ ३२ ॥

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30. O, friend, having returned to her residence by her state coach at high speed my pretty wife would get down at the palace gate. Then you will get a glimpse of her charming form like a flash of lightning that comes down to the earth from the sky.

31. At that moment you will not get enough time to see leisurely my beloved the foremost among chaste women, the essence of immaculate beauty, the pride of queens, for she will immediately get herself engaged in her evening rites in all devotion.

32. O, dear friend, from the very day of our marriage, it has been the practice of my beloved, to perform in all sincerity and devotion the Māṅgalya rite for my long life quite consistent with her deep love for me, and afterwards worship Lord Padmanābha the bounteous family deity of the Vañci dynasty.

पश्चादम्बां विहग ! जगतामिष्टदात्रीं च धात्रीं
कान्तं तस्यास्त्रिभुवनगुरुञ्चापि संसेव्य शान्ता ।
भूमीदेवैः परिचरितमाहृत्य भोज्यं सखीभि-
र्विश्वस्ताभिः पुनरपि निजागारमभ्येति तन्वी ॥ ३३ ॥

कम्रागारं निजमसदृशं प्राप्तवत्यां प्रियायां
गच्छेस्तूष्णीमवहितमतिः सौधवातायनं त्वम् ।
तत्र स्थित्वा तिमिरनिबिड निष्प्रतीघातमग्रे
विख्यातां तामवनिकमलां पश्य दीपान्तिकस्थाम् ॥ ३४ ॥

तुल्या राज्ञ्या जगति न परा विद्यते हृद्यरूपा
स्वर्गेऽप्येवं सुमतिभिरलं कीर्त्तनीयैर्गुणौघैः ।
सौभाग्यश्रीलसितसदनं यद्वपुः प्रेक्षकाणां
कुर्यादक्ष्णोः सपदि कृतिनां हर्षपीयूषवर्षम् ॥ ३५ ॥

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33. My wife would then worship goddess Pārvati the mother and benefactress of the whole world and Śiva her spouse who is the supreme Lord of the universe. After worship she eats her supper served by Brahmin cooks and comes back to her apartment accompanied by lady friends.

34. As my beloved reaches her beautiful chamber you may with great caution move to the door in silence. Remaining there unnoticed due to darkness, you may without any obstruction see that illustrious lady, the very incarnation of the goddess of prosperity, seated near the glowing lamp.

35. There is none in this world comparable to her in point of beauty; so is the case in heaven too. On account of her great qualities she is highly praised by men of wisdom. Her form, the abode of pristine beauty, would cause great delight to the eyes of those who are lucky to see her.

नारीरत्नेष्वसुलभतरं सान्द्रमोजस्तथा तत्
तेजः कान्तिप्रसरमहितं रूपमन्यास्वदृष्टम् ।
सौजन्यञ्चाप्यवधिरहितं लोकसाधारणं नो
राजन्यायाः प्रियखग ! गुणा नूनमन्यादृशास्ते ॥ ३६ ॥

हन्तानन्तातलपरिवृढा भूतिमत्त्वेऽप्यपास्ता-
हन्ता दन्तावलगतिरतिस्निग्धचेता विनीता ।
सन्तापं सा निखिलमपसार्याशु पादाश्रितानां
सन्तानाख्यस्तरुरिव ददात्यर्थितार्थानशेषान् ॥ ३७ ॥

दुर्मार्गात् सा प्रतिहृतमनाः सन्ततं बन्धुराङ्गी
धर्मासक्ता धरणिकमला धर्मपत्नी मदीया ।
निर्मायं सच्चरितनिरता वर्तते यद्यपीदं
मर्माविन्नः कदनमुदितं मामकादेव दोषात् ॥ ३८ ॥

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36. The great strength of her will is unknown to other ladies of distinction. Her lustrous charm too is great and beauty is unknown among other ladies. And her kindness is unlimited as well as unusual. The great qualities of that celebrated queen, O, friendly bird, are extraordinary indeed.

37. The queen is free from ego in spite of her royal greatness. Further, she is extremely kind-hearted, modest and charming. She removes the miseries of her dependants and fulfils all of their desires like the bountiful celestial tree.

38. O, the princess, the very goddess of prosperity, my devoted wife, remains totally averse to evil ways, is highly religious, and really anxious to lead a virtuous life. Yet this heart-breaking separation has occurred thanks solely to my great misfortune.

अस्तं याते कमितरि रवौ पद्मिनीवातितप्ता
कान्ता सा मे कदनलुलिता साम्प्रतं मद्वियोगे ।
प्राणित्यारात् खगतिलक ! तद्दर्शने को न रोदि-
त्युच्चैः कस्य द्रवति हृदयं नाश्मतुल्यं धरायाम् ॥ ३९ ॥

विश्वस्तां सा खग ! निजसखीं विप्रयोगाकुलास्म-
द्वार्तां सास्त्रं सततमनुयुञ्जीत सोत्कण्ठमारात् ।
अन्या का वा भवति भुवने तत्समा भर्तृभक्ता
मूर्तिर्या मज्जननिवहेष्वात्तपुण्योत्करस्य ॥ ४० ॥

वाणीदेवी सुरनिलयनाद् भूतये सज्जनानां
क्षोणीलोके सकृपमवतीर्णेति शङ्कां ददाना ।
नाणीयस्या करपटुतया वादयेत्साधु वीणा-
मेणीनेत्रा क्वणितसुधया ह्लादयन्ती हृदं ते ॥ ४१ ॥

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39. In this painful separation from me my beloved somehow continues to breathe in a state similar to that of a lotus-pond at the setting of the sun. Looking at her O, good bird, who will not weep; whose heart will not melt even though it is as hard as a rock ?[13]

40. That noble lady afflicted by separation from me would in great anxiety be asking in incessant tears her trusted maid about my weal. Who else is there O, bird, tn this world as devoted to her husband as she is to me! She is indeed the ripe fruit of all my religious merits acquired through endless lives.

41. Making the onlookers wonder whether Vāṇī the goddess of music has come down on earth moved with pity for the well being of the virtuous, my beloved would play on the violin so sweetly with great deftness of fingers in such a manner as to cause great joy in your mind by the mellifluous music.[14]

निर्मायालं कदनभिदुरं स्तोत्रजालं स्वकीयं
स्वस्थीकर्तुं व्यथितहृदयं देवसङ्कीर्तनेन ।
गाथां तस्यां मधुझरनिभामालपन्त्यां मुदब्धौ
मज्जेन्नूनं परमयि ! मयूरेन्द्र ! कर्णेन्द्रियं ते ॥ ४२ ॥

गेयालापैः श्रममुपगता पल्लवाङ्गी सुदूरं
त्यक्त्वाकल्पं विरहविधुरं मामनुस्मृत्य चित्ते ।
निःश्वस्योच्चैर्विवशहृदया चारुतल्पे निषण्णा
प्रेक्षेतालं स्वकरकृतमालेख्यमावेगतो मे ॥ ४३ ॥

भावस्थैर्यात् परमनुपमात् कृत्यभारैश्च नैकै-
र्वीतायासं कथमपि नयेत् प्रेयसी मे दिनं सा ।
रात्रौ तस्या हरति सुतरां धीरतां मद्वियोगः
सूर्यापायो भवति न च किं दुस्सहः पङ्कजिन्याः? ॥ ४४ ॥

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42. O, Peacock par excellence, as my beloved sings sweet devotional lyrics of her own composition in order to ease her heart of the agony of separation, your ears will spontaneously get themselves immersed for long in the ocean of mirth.[15]

43. As she becomes exhausted by singing, my beloved lovely like a tender sprout, will put away all her ornaments due to her deep grief of separation and in poignant thoughts regarding me will heave deep sighs. Extremely dejected in mood she will rest on her pretty couch and obviously moved she will time and again look at a portrait of mine painted with her own hands.[16]

44. With her native fortitude of mind and with many duties to attend to, she somehow will manage to spend the day time warding off her worry. But, O, good friend, during night the pangs of separation from me do cut at the root of her courage. Will not sunset prove to be unbearable to the lotus-pond ?[17]

पापेनैवं परवशतया वासरान् यापयन्तं
दूरस्थं मां स्वपनसमये प्राप्तुकामा प्रिया मे ।
तापोद्रेकात् तृणकटतले संशयीतेर्ष्ययालं
दूरीकुर्यात् कुटिलहृदयः किन्तु निद्रां कृतान्तः ॥ ४५ ॥

निद्राहीना निशि विधिवशाद्वल्लभा मे वराकी
शोकावेगादसकृदवतीर्यात्ममञ्चादशान्ता ।
ध्यायन्ती मां हृदि परिसरेत् सातिमन्दं गवाक्ष-
च्छिद्राभ्यर्णे पतग ! तरुणार्णोजकर्णेजपाक्षी ॥ ४६ ॥

कोकीवार्ता प्रियविरहिता कोमलाङ्गी तदा स्या-
देकीभूता निजपरिजनेष्वङ्ग ! निद्रां गतेषु ।
तस्यां दैन्याद्दलितमनसा जालकं प्राप्तवत्यां
संवद्येतावसरमयि ते मद्गिरावेदनायै ॥ ४७ ॥

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45. Due to my own sin I am spending day and might in misery at this distant place., My beloved, I am sure, hoping to meet me at least in dream will try her luck by lying down on a grass-mat. But I feel that the wicked fate in all its fury will not allow her to have a wink of sleep.[18]

46. Being miserably separated from me by ill-fate my beloved will lie sleepless during night and will get down from her couch restlessly every now and then, And thinking about me that peerless beauty would then gently walk near the opening of the window.

47. The beautiful princess worried like a *koki* bird that is separated from her mate will then be left alone as her maids would have gone asleep. As she in her most depressed mood comes to the window, O, friend, you will get an opportunity to deliver my message.[19]

वक्तव्या सा विहग ! भवता षड्जरावेण चारु-
स्निग्धेनैवं मम सहचरी प्रतिपूर्वं तदानीम् ।
"कान्तादिष्टं कथयितुमये ! राज्ञि ! सन्देशमारा-
दायातस्त्वत्पतिहितकरः श्रीहरिक्षेत्रतोऽहम्" ॥ ४८ ॥

एवं वाचं वदति मधुरां त्वय्यनल्पाङ्गशोभा
मन्दं तोषात्तव निकटमागत्य चित्रेण तन्वी ।
दृष्ट्वा च त्वां प्रमुदितमनाः श्रीविशाखः परं मत्-
क्षेमाधायीत्यविकलमतिश्चिन्तयेत्सा हृदन्ते ॥ ४९ ॥

ब्रूयादेवं पुनरपि भवान् मत्प्रियां वञ्चिलक्ष्मीं
शोकोत्सादात् स्फुरितवदनां स्वैरमुल्लासशाली ।
"स्मृत्वा नित्यं तव रसकरांश्चारुलीलाविशेषा-
नुल्लाघस्ते वसति रमणः साम्प्रतं भूमिनाथे ! ॥ ५० ॥

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48. O, bird, in your extremely sweet ṣadja tune you may then gladly tell my beloved as follows: "O, Your Highness, I a humble well-wisher of your consort, have arrived just now from Harikṣetra to convey to you a message from him."

49. As you tell these sweet words, that lady of perfect beauty will slowly come near you in great wonderment and on seeing you O, friend overpowered with joy will imagine that "Indeed it is Lord Viśākha who has brought me this luck."[20]

50. In continuation you may with respect tell my beloved, the queen whose face would have become bright due to the mitigation of her grief: "O, great princess your consort remains hale and hearty recalling always to mind his sweet experiences with you in the past.

स्कन्दं नत्वा दुरितशमनं त्वत्प्रियः प्रत्यहं तं
सम्प्रार्थ्यार्तः कदनभरतः पालनार्थं भवत्याः ।
सौवर्णाभं तव मृदुवपुः काम्यमालिङ्ग्य नित्यं
स्वात्मन्युच्चैर्मुदमनुभवत्यद्य सङ्कल्पशक्त्या ॥ ५१ ॥

धारापातान्नयनसलिलस्याविलास्यः परं त्वां
पृच्छत्यग्रे कुशलमयि ! ते कामुकः कोमलाङ्गि !
सौख्योपेतं जगति भवती वर्धतामित्थमेकै-
वाशा शश्वद् भवति हृदये तस्य सर्वोपरिष्टात्" ॥ ५२ ॥

स्वेच्छावृत्त्या दिशि दिशि सदा पर्यटन्तं पतङ्गं
हित्वा नीतिं मम खलु रहस्यानि वक्तुं प्रियो मे ।
उद्युक्तोऽभूत् कथमिति मतिर्मास्तु वैशाखपत्रं
जानीया मां सुकृति; न च किं भूतिकामासि भद्रे ! ॥ ५३ ॥

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51. In these days, O, great lady, your consort in great affliction devoutedly prays Skanda daily for your protection, and in imagination experiences great happiness embracing you of soft touch and golden colour.

52. O, beautiful queen, your consort with face stained too much with tears pouring down in unbroken chain, first of all wishes you all happiness. The only desire that he cherishes always above all, is that "Your Highness may prosper in this world in all happiness."

53. "How could my consort overlooking all proprieties confide in a wandering bird, my secrets"—O, Your Highness, do not think for a moment in this manner. You may please know that I am really the blessed bearer of god Viśākha. Are you not interested in your own good fortune?[21]

तान्तः कान्ताविरहदहनज्वालया दह्यमान-
स्वान्तः पापैर्निजदुरितजैर्विप्रतीसारमग्नः ।
सन्देशं त्वां विधुरहृदयां मन्मुखेन त्वदीयः
कान्तश्चिन्तातरलहृदयः स ब्रवीत्येवमार्ये ! ।। ५४ ।।

"साध्वीमौले ! मम तव तनुस्पर्शभाग्यं निरुद्धं
दैवेनैवं तदपि हृदि रागेण लीये भवत्याम् ।
हार्दस्यात्मप्रणयिनि ! परं तुङ्गतायैव नो तद्-
भङ्गायास्मिन् जगति विरहः कल्पते कात्र शङ्का ॥ ५५ ॥

यद्यप्येवं सुमुखि ! विततेशोकवारान्निधौ स-
म्मग्नो नित्यं हहह ! विलपाम्यात्मनाथेऽतिवेलम् ।
कस्मै वाहं मम हृदयजं शोकमावेदयेयं
तथ्यं ब्रूयां मम हि सुखदं सन्निधानं तवैकम् ॥ ५६ ॥

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54. O, respected madam, endowed with all noble qualities, your consort who is depressed, scorched by the grief of separation, repentent on his own past sins, and worried on account of thoughts regarding your present plight, wishes to convey his message of warm love to you through me in the following words:

55. "O, my darling, foremost among chaste women, fate has denied me the privilege of embracing your beautiful form, yet my mind adheres closely to you in love. O, my beloved, in this life separation will only serve to heighten love and certainly not to break it.[22]

56. Even if it is so, O, my beloved, as a result of being immersed in the ocean of the grief of separation, I weep always over my misfortune. To whom other than you can I describe my mental agony ? To tell the truth, your loving company is the only source of solace for me !

केलीसौधे प्रणयमसृणैर्नैकलीलाविशेषै-
रानन्दाब्धौ कुतुकभरितं मग्नयोरावयोस्तु ।
एवं भावी विधिरिति तदा शङ्कितं किं मनाग-
प्यात्माधीशे ! जगति भवितव्यस्य मार्गो विचित्रः ॥ ५७ ॥

हन्तास्माकं निखिलविपदां दुस्सहानां निदानं
मन्ये नान्यत् किमपि सुदृढं मामकीनात्प्रमादात् ।
त्यक्त्वा तस्मात् स्वपनमपि च प्राशनं चापि पश्चा-
त्तापं ह्येवं परमनुभवाम्यात्मनाथे ! सदैव ॥ ५८ ॥

गाढप्रेमप्रगुणकरुणं रूढवात्सल्यमस्मि-
न्नूढस्थेमस्फुटबहुमति त्वय्यजस्रं स्थितायाम् ।
मूढत्वेनाचरितमहितं यत्प्रिये ! तत्समस्तं
प्रौढस्त्रीणामनुपमशिरोलङ्कृतिस्त्वं क्षमस्व ॥ ५९ ॥

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57. O, peerless beauty, when we were spending happy days in amorous dalliances in our moon-lit residence swimming as it were in the ocean of mirth, did we ever think that such a fate would befall us ? O, my darling, unpredictable indeed is the course of destiny !

58. Alas ! my beloved, I consider my own fault as the only cause of our unbearable miseries. And on account of this I now spend my days in repentance without either food or sleep.

59. O, most dignified lady, you remained throughout with great sympathy, deep love, unfailing kindness and high respect towards me. But, I in my ignorance did many things that were ill advised. Let me for all these faults of mine seek pardon at your hands.

निष्कारुण्यं धरणिपतिना तावकात्सन्निधेर्मां
निष्कास्याथ प्रकटितरुषा कल्पिताः शास्तयस्ताः ।
निष्कालुष्ये ! दृढमतिरनादृत्य नूनं स्थिता त्वं
निष्कापट्यं; पतिहितकरी त्वादृशी का जगत्याम् ॥ ६० ॥

एकीभावं समुपगतयोरावयोरर्दनार्थं
वामेनैवं सपदि विधिना कल्पितोऽयं वियोगः ।
शस्तैर्विश्वोत्तरगुणगणैर्भूषितां त्वामकार्षीद्
भैमीसीताप्रभृतिभिरलं तुल्यकीर्तिं धरित्र्याम् ॥ ६१ ॥

पातिव्रत्यं परमयि पयोजाक्षि ! नारीजनानां
प्रायेणाद्य प्रविरलमिति व्याहृतिं धार्मिकाणाम् ।
श्लाघातीतैर्विमलचरितैर्दूरमुत्सार्य लोके
स्त्रीणां सद्वर्तनरतिजुषां मातृका भ्राजसे त्वम् ॥ ६२ ॥

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60. O, my beloved, unruffled and sincere to the very core, you resisted openly with an iron will the cruel mandates issued by the king in great anger after driving me away from you in the most merciless manner. Is there another woman on earth who is so faithful to her husband as you are ?[23]

61. This separation, O, queen, enforced on us by the crooked fate to cause us affliction as we remained in full harmony, has brought you universal fame equal to that of, Sītā and similar great women of old,

62. You shine forth as a model for righteous women disproving with your stainless and laudable acts the saying of the moralists that the great quality of chastity has become rare in these days.

भीत्या मुक्तं परजनितया भूतलं पालयन्ती
नीत्या 'विक्टोरिय' निरुपमश्रीमती हूणराज्ञी ।
प्रीत्या दद्याद् बहुमतिमशेषैः प्रशस्यां समर्हां
पृथ्व्यां साध्वीत्यसदृशयशोलाभवत्यै भवत्यै ॥ ६३ ॥

सञ्चिन्त्यैवं जलदचिकुरे ! किञ्चिदाश्वासपूर्वं
वर्ते यावत्कथमपि तदा वार्षिकः कालमेघः ।
निष्कारुण्यं विरहविधुरं मां प्रपीड्याशु तीव्रं
शोकाधिक्याद्विदलितमतिं प्राणशेषं तनोति ॥ ६४ ॥

वेण्याः कान्ते ! सुललिततनोश्चापि चित्ते स्मरामि
प्रेक्षे यावत् झटिति तटिता व्योम्नि नीलाम्बुदालिम् ।
धारापाते रणरणिकया मुह्यतीवान्तरात्मा
वर्षाकालं कथमिममहं यापयेयं वियुक्तः ॥ ६५ ॥

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63. Queen Victoria of unparalleled eminence who rules over her kingdom free from fear of foes, and meting out justice to all will one day be pleased to confer on you a proper and praiseworthy honour for you have already established an extraordinary reputation through out the world as a distinguished lady of great virtues.[24]

64. O, beautiful queen, harbouring such thoughts I will somehow console myself for a while but ere long the terrific rain clouds showing scant mercy strike at me and inflict pain on me making me so frustrated that I feel as good as dead,

65. O, my beloved, I remember your beautiful countenance and dark hair when I look at clouds with lightning. And as it rains my heart gets disturbed on account of great anxiety. Ha! how am I to spend this rainy season in this condition of separation from you.

वल्लीं जातिं प्रणयिनि ! मरुल्लोलितां वर्षबिन्दु-
स्तोमक्लिन्नां प्रतिनवसुमोत्फुल्लशोभां समीक्ष्य ।
प्रेमक्रोधक्षुभितकलुषां बाष्पधाराविलाङ्गीं
श्रीमन्मन्दस्मितरुचिमुखीं त्वामहं संस्मरामि ॥ ६६ ॥

स्वीये सौधेऽप्यपरिहरणीयान्यकार्याय किञ्चि-
द्दूरं याते मयि सपदि हा ! जाततापा दिवापि ।
रोदिष्युचैः प्रणयिनि ! तदेत्येवमालोच्य दूनं
चेतो मेऽद्य त्रुटति सुतरां दुस्सहेऽस्मिन् वियोगे ॥ ६७ ॥

लीलारण्ये विहगमृगयालोलुपोऽहं कदाचि-
न्नीलापाङ्गे ! कमपि हतवान् नीडजं कौतुकेन ।
आपन्नां तत्प्रियसहचरीं वीक्ष्य तां चापि नेतुं
कालागारं सपदि कृपया कातरे ! नन्ववादीः ॥ ६८ ॥

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66. In this rainy season as I see the jasmine creeper shaken by breeze, wet with drops of water and charming with newly bloomed flowers, O, my beloved, perforce I remember you as you get agitated with anger in love, sullied with torrents of tears and brightened up with graceful smiles in succession.

67. O, my darling, within our residence when I used to stay away a little engaged in some unavoidable work and that too during day time, you used to shed tears copiously unable to withstand the grief of separation. As I remember this my heart gets emotionally disturbed beyond limits in this unbearable separation !

68. Once in my enthusiasm for hunting, O, dark-eyed damsel, I shot down the male bird from a pair seated together in our garden. Obviously moved with sympathy did you not immediately ask me to bring an end to its distressed mate too ?[25]

प्राणेशित्रि ! प्रणयिनि ! सुखं चापि दुःखं च लोके
मिश्रीभूतं; भवति महतामप्यहो दुःखभारः ।
निर्धार्यैवं हृदयमधुना सान्त्वयित्वा कथञ्चि-
द्धीरे ! त्वं मद्विरहकदनस्यावशेषं सहस्व ॥ ६९ ॥

राजन्ये ! त्वं निरतिशयिता धीरतायां धराया-
मन्तःसारे प्रथितयशसः पूरुषास्तेऽसमानाः ।
मन्ये चास्मिन् विरहकदने दह्यमानाय मह्यं
प्रेयस्यास्ते परमविचलं धैर्यमेकावलम्बम् ॥ ७० ॥

लोकत्राणे प्रणिहितमतिः सेवनादादरेणा-
स्तोकप्रीतः समुदयदिनश्रीभरः श्रीविशाखः ।
कोकद्वन्द्वप्रतिममनिशं क्लिश्यतोरावयोर्द्राक्
शोकं हृत्वा सति ! वितनुतान्मङ्गलं भङ्गहीनम्" ॥ ७१ ॥

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69. O, my darling, in this world happiness and sorrow remain mixed. Alas, even great people become prey to untold grief. With such thoughts you may gain mental peace and somehow bear the rest of this agony of separation.[26]

70. O, glorious queen, you are unexcelled in courage in the whole world and in real personal grit even those highly celebrated men are not equal to you. O, my darling, I do feel that your unshakable courage alone can sustain me in this scorching grief of separation from you.

71. Śrī Viśākha, as glorious as the rising sun, alert in bringing succour to his people and highly pleased with us on account of our sincere services, O, my beloved, will bring to us who suffer like a *koka* pair, unmitigated happiness in the near future by removing all of our sorrows."[27]

इत्येवं मद्वचनकथनात् सान्त्वयित्वातितान्तां
सत्ये श्रद्धाभरितहृदयां मत्प्रियां त्वं, तदीयम् ।
वृत्तान्तं चाप्यखिलमवगम्याशु मां बोधयित्वा
कृत्ये स्वीये कृतिवर ! समुद्यच्छ मोदाद्यथेच्छम् ॥ ७२ ॥

निष्प्रत्यूहं पतग ! नियतौ लोकयात्रां विधात्र्या-
मावामेवं चिरविरहितौ दम्पती स्याव युक्तौ ।
त्वं च स्थानं प्रभुनिलयने शोभनं नीलकण्ठः
सम्प्राप्योच्चैः श्रियमनुभवेः श्रीविशाखप्रसादात् ॥ ७३ ॥

मयूरदूते उत्तरभागः समाप्तः ।

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72. O, dear bird, with these words ef mine you please console my beloved who is crest-fallen and yet clinging to the path of truth. You may also gather her whereabouts in detail and communicate them to me. And then at your pleasure betake yourself to your usual duties with the satisfaction of having performed your mission.[28]

73. As Destiny directs the course of events in this world unimpeded, I believe with the grace of Lord Viśākha we the long separated couple would be reunited and you Neelakaṇṭa would attain an exalted position in the abode of the Lord and enjoy all happiness of life.[29]

Thus ends Part Two of The Peacock-Messenger

NOTES

PART I

1. Vañci was the name of the ancient capital of Chera kings, and in course of time it gained currency as a name of the State of Travancore.

The king was known by the name Āyilyam Tirunal Rama Varma. Āyilyam Tirunāl means "the personage born under the star Āyilyam". The word Tirunāl consists of two words *tiru* (śrī) and *nāl* (nakṣatra), and Āyilyam is the corrupt form of the Sanskrit word *āśleṣa*, in Malayalam. The presiding deity of Āyilyam star is serpent and as such the references to serpent in the poem indicate Āyilyam Tirunāl the poisonous one.

The adjective *śrīmān* carries the meaning glorious as well as poisonous.

Lakṣmī denotes Lakshmi Bai, the Senior Maharani of Travancore, and Kerala her consort Kerala Varma.

The word Kerala suggests that the imprisonment of Kerala Varma was a calamity to the whole of Kerala.

2. Kerala Varma was under fetters from 1874 to 1879 and he was subjected to untold insults during this period.

3. Harikṣetra is locally known as Harippad and it is situated at a distance of 125 kilometres to the north-west of Trivandrum. There is a famous temple dedicated to Skanda where a pea-cock, believed to be the bearer of the god, is reared in reverence.

The references to Skanda or Viśākha in the poem indirectly indicate Viśākham Tirunāl the heir apparent whom the hero held in great respect and admiration.

The nīlakaṇṭha (pea-cock) in the temple too had its own human counterpart in one Nīlakaṇṭha Pillai a faithful officer under Viśākham Tirunāl, who used to carry messages from the heroine to the hero and vice versa while they were in separation.

4. The propriety in using the language of the heart for communicating the message to the pea-cock may specially be noted.

5. After shutting her consort in jail, the Maharaja restricted strictly the movements of the Maharani and kept her under watch.

6. The following Meghadūta couplet may be recalled here:

meghāloke bhavati sukhinoʃpyanyathāvṛttii cetaḥ
kaṇṭhāśleṣapraṇayinijane kim punardūrasamsthe (1.2.cd.)

(At the sight of a cloud even the heart of a happy man will get agitated. What then would be the condition of one whose love whom he is anxious to embrace, is far away)

7. This appears to be an echo of the fourth line in stanza 1.61 of the Meghadūta :

krīḍālolāḥ śravaṇaparuṣairgarjitairbhāyayethāḥ

(You must terrify them engaged in sports with thunders repugnant to their ears)

8. This stanza suggests bitter hatred on the part of the hero for his enemy Āyilyam Tirunāl whom the snakes represent.

9. Compare with the following description of a cat appearing to be artificial in the Māgha (3.51)

cikramsayā kṛtrimapattripaṅkteḥ
kapota-pāliṣu niketanānām
mārjāramapyāyataniścalāṅgam
yasyam janāḥ kṛtrimameva mene

(In that city the cat that remained with its body still and stretched out in its anxiety to catch the artificial pigeons in their holes mistaking them to be real ones, was mistaken by the people to be artificial)

10. Note the pun on the word *pannaga* which means a snake in Sanskrit. The word *pannaka* is used in Malayalam to denote the upper part of a canoe. The pea-cock is advised not to mistake the word *pannaka* uttered by the boat men for *pannaga* and get agitated about the presence of a snake somewhere there.

Further there is pun on the words *bhoga* (hood of a snake or carnal pleasure) and *vayas* (bird or youth). The advice suggested is that a youth should put a limit to carnal pleasures lest it would meet with ruin.

11. The local name of the backwater is Aṣṭamuṭi. In those days it was the practice of Englishmen, probably residing at Quilon, to take pleasure trips in that backwater in boats along with their family.

12. The standard of comparison here is the Maināka mountain which according to mythology had flown into the ocean and took refuge there under the patronage of Varuṇa lest its wings too would have been cut by Indra as in the case of other mountains.

13. Quilon (Kollam) is a coastal town situated about sventy kilometres to north-west of Trivandrum. It is of great historical importance and there are many theories regarding the origin of its name. One of such theories is that the name was given by the Aryans who migrated to the place from Kolhapur in the eighth century A.D. It is also believed that the Kollam era was started by them. Kollam was the capital of Venad in 13th century and it came to be called Deśiṅganāḍ after Jayasimha who ruled over the country. In addition to ancient Hindu temples there are ancient churches and mosques as well in the town.

14. A long British flag used to remain hoisted on the tall mast when the Resident was present at the Residency.

Europeans are known as Huṇas in Indian works as they resemble in colour the white Huns who invaded India in ancient times.

15. Āśrāma is a place on the outskirts of Quilon town and is famous for its ancient temple dedicated to Lord Krishna. The descriptions of the divine music in the next stanza is reminiscent of that in Meghadūta (1.56).

16. The great temple referred to in the stanza is dedicated to Supreme Mother called Ānandavallī in the locality and her spouse Lord Siva. Hence, it is called Ānandavallīśvara.

17. This is a stanza embellished with *śleṣa* (double entendre). The central idea is that the worshippers who assemble

at Ānandavallīśvara temple will feel happy to see Lord Siva as well as the pea-cock there in close quarters. The adjectives are common to both. Lord Siva as well as the pea-cock is highly fond of dancing (*saktam nṛtte*). Moreover Siva is *ahibhuja* (one who wears snakes on his hand) while the pea-cock is *ahibhuj* (one who eats snakes). Further both are of blue neck (*nīlakaṇṭha*) as the Lord swallowed *kālakūṭa* poison which got stuck up in his throat, and as the bird has naturally a blue neck. Again both are devoted to Skanda as they are respectively the god's father and bearer. Moreover they are both eulogised by good people. In regard to Siva, *bhavantam* has to be split into *bhavam* and *tam* (that great Bhava or Siva) and with regard to the pea-cock it has to be taken as one single word meaning 'you' (accusative case).

18. A battallion of soldiers was stationed at Quilon in those days and outside duty hours they used to wander about.

In the previous stanza (no. 50) read *vicaramsteṣu* instead of *vicaranneṣu*.

19. This is another demonstration of the heroe's bitter hatred for Āyilyam Tirunāl Maharaja, his life's enemy.

The second hemistich recalls to the reader's mind the last line of the stanza No. 1. 53 in Meghadūta.

"āpanmārtipraśamanaphalāḥ sampado hyuttamānām"

(The resources of the great are indeed meant for the alleviation of the sorrows of the distressed)

20. The word *dvijihva* means a double-tongued person as well as a snake. A comparison is drawn between them employing double entendre. With respect to the double tongued person the words *śrīmattva*, *jagatprāṇa*, *ahibhaya* and *kauṭilya* mean prosperity, life of men, danger from one's own allies and treachery. With respect to snake they respectively mean poisonousness, air, fear of a lurking snake and crooked movement.

The stanza reflects the state of affairs in the court of Āyilyam Tirunāl. The compound word *dvijihvastoma* means indirectly Āyilyam Tirunāl and his satellites.

21. Varkala is famous for its ancient temple dedicated to Lord Krishna, incarnation of the supreme God Hari. As Vaishnavites from different parts of India visit the temple for worship it has become an all India pilgrim centre. It is situated about forty kilometres to the north-west of Trivandrum.

22. The distinction made between snakes and serpents suggests a comparison between the Āyilyam Tirunāl who was poisonous and his brother Viśākham Tirunāl who was of divine qualities.

23. There are two canals of which the first was constructed in 1877 and the other in 1880. They are respectively 2370 and 1140 feet long. It is not known whether there exist such long canals like these for water transport in any other part of India.

24. Veli backwater is about ten kilometres to the north of Trivandrum. The land lying between the backwater and sea is also known as Veli. There is a hill, on the eastern side of which one may see black rocks jutting into the sea. In the next stanza (No. 64) these rocks are compared to a group of clouds that has come down to drink water from the lake. This is reminiscent of the following passage in Meghadūta: *toyamādāya gaccheḥ* (1.20) (O, cloud you may proceed after storing water from the river Revā).

25. The name Lakshmi indirectly refers to Lakshmi Ba the heroine who resided at Trivandrum.

Trivandrum was once the capital of Venadu and later it became the capital of the State of Travancore (1745-1949). It has got a long history extending over a period of not less than 1000 years. Trivandrum is the anglicised form of *Tiru anantapura* in Malayalam in which *tiru* stands for *śrī* in Sanskrit. The basic name of the city is Anantapura and it is derived from Ananta the holy couch of Śrī Padmanābha to whom the most illustrious temple in the city is dedicated. It is also known by the names Anantaśayana and Syānandūrapura. In addition to Śrīpadmanābha temple there are many other ancient temples in the city. It was developed under the patronage of the kings of Travancore particularly after it became their capital. It is a great centre of culture and learning, and at present it is the capital of Kerala.

PART II

1. The comparison of the Trivandrum city with the pea-cock is parallel to that of *Alakā* with the cloud in the Meghadūta. In both of the works the comparison occurs in the first stanza in Part II with which begins the description of the place where the heroine resided. In Meghadūta the hero tells the cloud :

prāsādāstvām tulayitumalam yatra taistairviśeṣaiḥ

(There the mansions with their glorious features will, beyond doubt, come on a par with you)

In the present stanza the word *śrīlāsya* is a double entendre capable of being interpreted as beautiful appearance with reference to the city and exquisite dance with reference to the pea-cock.

2. The fancy (utprekṣā) may hold good in the case of Dvārakā but not so in the case of Trivandrum which is not surrounded by sea.

3. Here there is a pun on the word *rambhā*. The word denotes the celestial courtesan as well as plantain tree. There was at that time a large garden of plantain trees very close to the residence of the heroine.

4. This i clearly an echo of the following stanza in Bālabhārata :

krīḍāvanāntānmarudetya mandam
gavākṣarandhreṇa gṛham praviṣṭaḥ
asyām ratānte sudṛśām tanoti
svedāmbumuktāmaṇijālacauryam (5.99)

(The garden breeze that gently reaches there enters the houses in that city and steals away the jewels of sweat on the body of the beautiful ladies at the end of co-habitation.)

5. In those days there were many elephants in the Maharaja's palace and it was indeed a sight to see them moving

along the public road as they were taken out for washing and feeding.

6. Under the royal regime the mounted military used to parade itself on public roads particularly on ceremonial occasions like the festival in Śrī Padmanābha temple and Dasra.

7. On ceremonial occasions the infantry also used to march on the public road covering a long distance. Looked at particularly from the terrace of a building the row of soldiers will appear like the multi-coloured rain-bow. The hero must have personally observed this from his palace terrace.

8. Inside the four walls of the Śrī Padmanābha temple, in the north-western corner, there is a small temple dedicated to Lord Krishṇa.

The upanishadic dictum *tattvamasi* is one of the four *mahāvākyas*, the other three being *aham brahmāsmi*, *prajñānamānandam brahma* and *ayamātmā brahma*.

The image in the temple represents Lord Krishna as bearing a pea-cock-plume on his head and holding conch and disc in his hands (see the next stanza).

9. In fact royal palaces like Krishna Vilas were decorated with the carved images of pea-cock after the date of the message.

10. In the Devahāra (Tevara) palace garden there were a number of mango trees yielding different varieties of mango. The description apears to be influenced by Meghadūta (II. 12).

yatropānte kṛtakatanayaḥ kāntayā vardhito me
hastaprāpyastabakanamito bālamandāravṛkṣaḥ

(Near which (Yaksa's residence) stands a young Mandāra tree reared like her own child by my beloved and bent with clusters of flowers which could be plucked by hand.)

11. This description of the garden is an imitation of a stanza occuring in the Śiśupālavadha (10.3).

krāntakāntavadanapratibimbe
bhagnabālasahakārasugandhau
svāduni praṇaditālini śīte
nirvavāra madhumīndriyavargaḥ.

12. Ullūr is a small village in the outskirts of Trivandrum where there is a famous Skanda temple. Even though her movements were restricted, the Maharani was allowed to go and worship at that temple.

13. This stanza is reminiscent of the Meghadūta passage (II.17).

sūryāpāye na khalu kamalam puṣyati svām abhikhyām
(Indeed in the absence of the sun the lotus does not retain its pristine beauty).

14. This is a stanza parallel to the one in Part II of Meghadūta describing the heroine as playing on Vīṇa.

utsaṅge vā malinavasane saumya nikṣipya vīṇām
madgotrānkam viracitapadam geyam udgātukāmā
tantrīmārdrām nayanasalilaiḥ sārayitvā kathañcid
bhūyo bhūyaḥ svayampikṛtām mūrcchanām vismarantī
(2.23)

Here Kalidasa portrays a typical heroine seperated from her beloved. She is in rags and she attempts to play on the *vīṇa* singing a song containing her beloved's name, but tears caused by the grief of seperation obstruct her time and again, even if she wipes the strings of the instrument. This is idealistic and romantic to the very core, and the reader gets simply moved. But the Maharani, the heroine of Mayūradūta, cannot possibly be protrayed in this fashion. She cannot afford to be in rags nor does her royal dignity permits her to shed tears in the presence of others. Further, she is such an adept in music that she found immense pleasure from the art, as a relief to her sorrow of separation. This is an instance which gives a clue to the difference in the depiction of love in Meghadūta and Mayūradūta.

15. The heroine was not only an eminent musician but well-versed in composing songs. There are a number of musical compositions to her credit including one entitled *virahiṇīpralāpa* (the prattlings of a lady in separation).

16. It is well known that the heroine was an expert in painting. Therefore, this description should not be taken as a conventional one in such poetic contexts.

17. As the Maharani had a principality of her own called Śrīpādam, during day time she will be busy with administrative matters.

18. The following passage in Meghadūta (II. 42) may be recalled here:

krūrastasminnapi na sahate saṅgamam nau kṛtāntaḥ

(Cruel fate does not brook our union even in that picture)

19. The comparison of the heroine with a separated *koki* bird is parallel to that in the Meghadūta (II. 20).

dūrī bhūte mayi sahaeare cakravākīm ivaikām

(Solitary like a cakravakī bird as me, her beloved is stationed far away).

20. In her woe, but for her consort, Viśākham Tirunāl Rama Varma was the only support to the Maharani. As has already been indicated Nīlakaṇṭha Pillai, the trusted officer of Viśākham Tirunāl, used to convey tidings of her consort to her. Here apparently Viśākha means the god Viśākha, but Viśākham Tirunāl too is indicated. The helpless couple adored the prince like a god himself.

21. In this stanza also the name Viśākha is used with reference to both the god and the prince. The question "Are you not interested in your own good luck" points to the fact that Viśākham Tirunāl would certainly bring good luck to her when he ascends the throne.

22. The sentiments expressed here bear resemblance with those reflcted in the Meghadūta II.49.

snehānāhuḥ kimapi virahadhvamsinaste tvabhogā-
dīṣṭe vastunyupacitarasāḥpremarāśibhavanti.

(They say that affections die away in separation; but really they with their ardour intensified towards the desired object become (i.e. develop into) a heap of love).

23. Having interned the hero in a far away place the king persecuted the heroine very much. Further, he wanted her to divorce the hero and marry another person. The

reply given to the king by the heroine was "I have not yet become a *vidhavā* (widow) to marry another person."

24. Queen Victoria conferred the honour of C. I. on the Maharani in 1880 and the insignia was presented to her by the British Resident at a Durbar held in Trivandrum.

25. One may doubt that this is an adaptation of the famous legend connected with the origin of poetry in Sanskrit. But it cannot be so since the hero was himself a hunter. Further, it must be borne in mind that the poem was published when the heroine was also alive.

26. The sentiment reflected in the stanza is practically the same as that in Meghadūta II.46.

kasyātyantam sukhamupanatam duḥkhamekāntato vā
nīcairgacchatyupari ca daśā cakranemikrameṇa.

(Whom does happiness invariably attend on or misery invariably befall. In the case of all, fortune goes up and down like the movement of a wheel).

27. Reference to Viśākha here holds good to the god as well as Viśākham Tirunāl the heir-apparent. The adjective "as glorious as the rising sun" is particularly suited to the prince as he was to occupy the throne in the near future. That the couple was very loyal to him, is clearly indicated here.

28. In Meghadūta the hero allows the cloud to go wherever it wants (*iṣṭān deśān jalada vicara*) but the hero in Mayūradūta wants the pea-cock to come to him once again after knowing the whereabouts of the heroine and then leave as it pleased.

29. Viśākha in this stanza also stands for both the god and Viśākham Tirunāl. On his ascending the gadi the Prince released the hero from jail and appointed Nīlakaṇṭha Pillai as the Chief Executive in his palace office.

[Corrections: *hitvā* in 1.42, *nibiḍe* in 2.34, and *prīti* in 2.48]

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Dr. P. K. Narayana Pillai

BIO-DATA

Born at Tiruvalla, Kerala State on 25th December 1910. Son of late Shri T. Goda Varma of Paliyakkara Palace and Smt. Lakshmi Amma. Married to Smt. J. Kamalamma, daughter of late Shri N. S. Raman Pillai, District Magistrate and late Smt. Janaki Amma, in 1940. Family consists of wife and three daughters Smt. K. Jayashree, Smt. K. Manjushree and Smt. K. Rajashree.

Passed M. A. (Sanskrit) 1935, and M. A. (Malayalam) 1936 with First Rank from Madras University. Acquired Ph.D. in Sanskrit from Bombay University in 1944.

Fellow of the Deccan College Research Institute (1940—44), Curator, University Manuscripts' Library, Trivandrum (1948—52), Professor of Sanskrit, University College (1952—57), Principal, Sanskrit College, (1957—63), Professor and Head of the Department of Malayalam, University of Kerala (1963—70), Dean, Faculty of Oriental Studies 1957 onwards for about 15 years, Tagore Endowment Lecturer, Kerala University (1979), Member of the Senate, Kerala University (1949—72), Member, Kerala University Syndicate (1957—63) One-man Commission for Sanskrit University (1971—72).

Founder Secretary, Yuvajana-gairvani Samsad (1935), Chairman, Cultural Development Committee, Trivandrum (1960—72), President, Kerala Hindi Prachar Sabha (1962—65), President Samasta Kerala Sahitya Parishad (1963), Founder President, Sri Sankara Sanskrit Academy. (1974), President and Hon: Director, Ulloor Memorial Library and Research Institute from 1956.

Visited and worked in institutions of Oriental Learning all over India.

Founded Ulloor Memorial Library and Research Institute (1956) with the co-operation of others.

Pioneer in the field of Open University education. Established an Open University Centre and functioned as its Hon: Director from 1977. Submitted to Government a detailed proposal for setting up an Open University in Kerala in 1984.

Discovered the Malayalam musical classics Rāmakatha Pāṭṭu in 1965 and Bhāratam Pāṭṭu in 1970.

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Vivekananda Award (1972), Travancore Devaswom Board, Kerala Sahitya Akademi Award (1977), SPCS Award (1981), Kalidasa Award (1979), Uttar Pradesh Sanskrit Akademi, National Award for Sanskrit (1982), Kendra Sahitya Akademi.

MAIN CONTRIBUTIONS

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MEGHA AND MAYŪRA

The apparent frame of a parted husband sending a love message to his devoted wife far away, through a peacock, is indeed a worn-out poetic concept. But to a sensitive reader who knows the biographical background of Kerala Varma, an entirely new significance of Mayūra dūta comes to be suggested in a most striking and appealing way. This is the very highway of *vastudhavani* highlighted as a norm of best poetry by no less a critic than Ānandavardhana who is admittedly the doyen of Indian theoreticians of poetry.

While talking of correspondences *(saṁvāda)* with earlier literary output of masters, Ānandhavardana notes three types: (i) that like reflected image of an object in a mirror; (ii) that like a painted portait of an object; (iii) that like the resemblance between twins. He observes that while the first one has no reality of its own, the second has but seeming reality, and thus deserves no credit, But the third likeness is something to be welcomed and not to be condemned; because the twins have not only independent bodies but independent souls of their own. The parallelism between this *Mayūradūta and Meghadūta* is indeed like that of the twins in the parlance of Ānandavardhana.

Nay, it is much more. We know of several experimenters of this *Dūta-kāvya* in the history of Sanskrit lyric poetry Jinasena, Dhoyī Vedānta Deśika etc. They all exeperimented with varying main *rasa* or sentiment from *vipralambha-śṛṅgāra* to *bhakti*, *śānta* and so forth. But no one ever attempted to make the *vipralambha-śṛṅgāra* itself richer by adding on to it a veneer of autobiographical and historical reality.

The treatment of the heroine again is neither conventional nor stereotyped. The husband not only loves her intimately but admires her for her dignity and sagacity and openly expresses his gratitude to her for various good turns. The description of the Kerala landscape is at once realistic and enchanting.

Dr. K. Krishnamoorthy
(in the introduction)

THE PEACOCK MESSENGER

Dr. P. K. Narayana Pillai